GUIDE

TO

BLENHEIM.

Entered at Stationers Hall, according to Act of Parliament.

Frontiſpiece.



North, or Grand Front of Blenheim, in Oxfordshire.

K Mavor

NEW DESCRIPTION

OF

BLENHEIM,

THE SEAT OF

HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

To which is prefixed,

BLENHEIM, a POEM.

——————not the vale
Of TEMPE, fam'd in ſong, nor IDA's grove
Such beauty boaſts.

LORD LYTTELTON's Blenheim.

Qui fait aimer les champs, fait aimer la vertu.

DE LILLE.

A NEW, AND MUCH IMPROVED EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND; AND
PRINCE AND COOKE, OXFORD.
MDCCLXXXIX.

North, or Grand Front of Blenheim, in Oxfordshire.

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TO

THEIR GRACES,

The Duke and Ducheſs of Marlborough,

THIS PERFORMANCE

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED;

AS AN HUMBLE TESTIMONY OF PROFOUND

VENERATION

FOR WHATEVER IS AMIABLE IN PRIVATE LIFE,

OR CAPABLE OF REFLECTING REAL LUSTRE

ON EXALTED RANK;

BY THEIR GRACES

MOST DEVOTED, AND

MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

W. MAVOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE favourable reception with which the Public has honoured this Performance having rendered a new edition neceſſary, the Author has thrown the whole into another form; and by a reviſion of the Poem, and a very conſiderable enlargement of the Deſcription, has adapted it for the general convenience and information of the numerous and reſpectable viſitors of BLENHEIM, which include almoſt every perſon of condition in theſe kingdoms, and all the foreigners of

quality who travel into England. Thankful for the indulgence already experienced, he has been anxious to repay it by every attention in his power to gratify the curioſity of his Patrons; and he is not without hopes, that the Deſcription he now ſubmits to the teſt of impartiality will prove ſufficiently minute to direct ſpectators to the moſt beautiful objects when preſent, and to revive their impreſſion when loſt.

If in this he ſhould have unfortunately failed, he ſhall yet retain the conſcious ſatisfaction of having neither gratified ſpleen, nor intentionally flattered error. The frequent review of the illuſtrious ſcenes deſcribed, has given him a pleaſure which no reflection can diminiſh; and

though

though envy or malevolence may depreciate the merits of the compoſition, they can never be able to detract from the innocence of the purſuits.

Woodſtock Academy,
July 1ſt, 1789.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

BLENHEIM may be ſeen every afternoon from three to five o'clock, except on Sundays, and public days, which uſually commence the firſt Tueſday in Auguſt, and continue for ſix ſucceſſive Tueſdays.

The PARK and GARDENS, on proper application, will be ſhewn at any hour of the day, except during the time of divine ſervice on Sunday.

LOCAL Poetry is a Species of Compoſition, of which the fundamental Subject is ſome particular Landſcape to be poetically deſcribed, with the Addition of ſuch Embelliſhments as may be ſupplied by hiſtorical Retroſpection, or incidental Meditation.

JOHNSON.

ARGUMENT.

Invocation and Addreſs to Chaucer, the Father of Engliſh Poetry—Scene, a May Morning—Subject propoſed—Ancient Palace—Alfred—Henry II.—Roſamond—The Black Prince—The Princeſs Elizabeth—Modern Improvements—Blenheim—Paintings—Apoſtrophe to Artiſts—Tapeſtry—Addreſs to George Duke of Marlborough—Noon—A View from the Triumphal Gate near Woodſtock—Churchill's Pillar—Character—Woodſtock—Origin of the Echo—Evening—Flower Baſket—Caſcade—Reflection—Fountain—High Lodge—Landſcape—Oxford—Concluſion.

BLENHEIM:

A

POEM.

IMMORTAL CHAUCER! from ELYSIAN bowers,
Where Pleaſure's Sun illumes the light-wing'd hours;
Where deathleſs wreaths poetic brows entwine,
Nor ENVY blaſts the honours of the Nine;
Propitious liſt!—Thy once-lov'd haunts explore,
Where raptur'd Muſes caught thy lays of yore;
When ſweeteſt notes made vocal every grove,
And every echo whiſper'd heartfelt love.

First-born of bards! when Fancy paints thy name,
I catch contagion from thy hallow'd fame;
Through all my ſoul devolves Ambition's tide,
With thee, down future years, I ſeem to glide:
My little bark gains impulſe from thy oar,
Quits the low ſtrand, and ſeeks the Muſes' ſhore.
O bleſs'd in fortune! and in fame too bleſs'd,
By kings and princes honour'd and careſs'd!
If e'er thy gentle ſpirit hovers near,
Thy humble ſuppliant mildly deign to hear:
On me, the meaneſt of the tuneful throng,
Pour down thy fire, and elevate my ſong;
O'er every line thy inſpiration throw,
And teach my numbers, like my theme, to glow!
Now opening morn the orient decks with red,
And every ſtar of ſilver light is fled;
Soft vernal gales diſpenſe a ſweet perfume,
And ſmiling FLORA wantons in her bloom:
In verdant veſture fields and trees appear,
Unnumber'd beauties paint the genial year;

While

While choral lays, from all the feather'd train,
Swell the ſweet concert, and delight the plain.
Through ſhady thickets trips the timid fawn,
The nimble doe bounds briſkly o'er the lawn;
The woolly race to early paſture creep,
And liquid gems from every green blade ſweep.
Acroſs the viſta limps the watchful hare,
And ſtarts, and trembles at the ſportive air;
Surveys my ſteps, then meditates her flight,
Seeks the cloſe covert, and avoids my ſight.
Fear not, ye painted tenants of the grove,
Purſue your ſong, and celebrate your love!
Fly not, ye fawns! no hoſtile arms I bear,
My heart too feeling to increaſe your fear;
My hands too pure to rob the warbler's neſt,
The young to cage, or wound the tuneful breaſt!
No tyrant deeds my early ſteps intend,
In me behold your lover and your friend,
The Muſes' votary, warm'd by NATURE's charms,
To paint HER beauties—not to ſpread alarms.
Enchanting NATURE! miſtreſs of my heart,
Thy form I bear in every vital part;

Enraptur'd trace thee, in each circling view,
Through every ſcene thy devious ſteps purſue;
And as I range, through different objects toſt,
Awhile from Memory's page my ills are loſt;
Hope's ardent eye her fruitleſs proſpects leaves,
Nor fond Reflection meditates and grieves.

Let others ſing of TEMPE's bloomy vale,
INDOSTAN's ſhades, SABÆA's ſpicy gale;
In viſionary bliſs with PLATO rove
Through ACADEMUS' conſecrated grove;
Purſue the windings of ILYSSUS' ſtream,
Or, lull'd by Muſes, on PARNASSUS dream:
Enough for me, amid theſe vernal bowers,
To ſing of Nature's ſweets, and BLENHEIM's towers;
Enough for me, the minutes to beguile *,
And, O! too much, if MARLBOROUGH deign to ſmile!

* This Poem was originally written during the intervals that illneſs, of which the Author has an ample ſhare, gave him a neceſſary relaxation from more important avocations; or when he fled to the alleviations of verſe, as an antidote for the preſſure of care.

Where

Where yon ſpread trees wave o'er the cryſtal
ſtream,
And ſhew inverted by the ſolar beam;
There, where the margin's daiſy-mantled ſide
Shelves down to kiſs the congregated tide,
An ancient palace ſtood, the lov'd retreat
Of Britain's monarchs from the toils of ſtate;
Where, dropt the weight of diademic power,
The king, in private, ſpent the tranquil hour;
New ſchemes contriv'd, or ponder'd on the paſt,
Nor felt Time ſlowly lag, nor fly too faſt.
Here ſacred ALFRED, victor of his foes,
Indulg'd a ſtudious, and a mild repoſe;
Undrew the veil that wrapt the moral page,
And ſooth'd by claſſic arts a barbarous age;
Bade Science bloom with renovated grace,
And claſp the Muſes in a cloſe embrace.
Here valiant HENRY, crown'd by War and Love,
Form'd the fam'd labyrinth, and rear'd the grove;
In ſcenes of dalliance ſunk the hero's fire,
And wak'd to CLIFFORD's charms th' ignoble
lyre.

But not that arm, which ſhook each hoſtile-ſtate;
That ſword, reſiſtleſs as the blow of Fate;
From jealous Rage could ſave this lovely flower,
And ſtay vindictive ELEONORA's power:
Frail beauty falls—the king diſſolves in tears,
And mourns the burden of the crown he wears.

Ill-fated fair! by HENRY led aſtray,
And taught to tread Seduction's thorny way;
Lur'd from parental arms, ere Prudence' call
Fix'd Virtue's wiſh, or pictur'd Vice's fall;
Immur'd by Love in ſolitary bowers,
And doom'd to wither, like the deſert flowers!
Oft as the Muſe, when evening ſhades prevail,
And balmy fragrance loads the paſſing gale,
With ſtudious ſteps thy once lov'd haunts ſurveys,
Thy tragic fate excites her moral lays;
Compaſſion's veil conceals Pollution's ſtain,
And Pity's tear bedews thy guilty reign.

And can the Muſe, as through the miſt of years
Time's lengthen'd viſta to her view appears,
Forget to ſtrew an EDWARD's honour'd herſe
With the ſmall tribute of a plauſive verſe;

Forget

Forget the Prince's worth, the Hero's fire,
Nor wake to patriot warmth the tuneful lyre?
Illuſtrious EDWARD! on thy natal hour,
With partial aſpects ſhone each heavenly power:
PEACE from her olive throne triumphant ſung,
And fierce BELLONA many a pœan rung;
The gentle Arts with approbation ſmil'd,
And War's wild offspring hail'd their favourite child.
O, fitted, or to ſhine in martial pride,
When hoſtile legions preſs on every ſide;
Or give to Science all her native charms,
And conquer Minds by Reaſon's nobler arms!
Fain would the Muſe a laſting wreath entwine,
To deck with vivid bloom thy brow divine:
Fain would ſhe ſing of POICTIERS' tented field,
And with the Lily grace thy ſable ſhield;
But NATURE's charms recal her wild career,
And fix her, ardent, to a meeter ſphere.
What hoſts of heroes, loſt in whelming Time,
Have grac'd thy margin, ſoft meandering GLYME!

What trains of beauties, on thy willow'd ſide,
Have tripp'd the velvet lawn in virgin pride!
What ſplendid rolls of kings and queens appear,
Who once ſhed kindeſt, brighteſt luſtre here!
What tuneful lays entranc'd the liſtening ſwain,
What ſhouts of joy made vocal all the plain;
When ſhone the court in all the blaze of ſtate,
And Pleaſure ſmil'd upon the regal ſeat:
When every wiſh with every joy was crown'd,
And hovering Cupids ſpread their wings around!

Yet cannot Birth, or Fortune's powerful claim,
Beauty's fair form, or Virtue's heavenly flame,
From Life's fell cares their lov'd poſſeſſors free;
Elſe, why, ELIZA, frown'd the Fates on thee?
Why dropp'd the tear, as from the lattice ſeen,
The rural maiden, ſinging, croſs'd the green?
But that you felt the crime of being great,
And grac'd a priſon, ere you rul'd a ſtate!

Thoſe ſcenes are vaniſh'd—ſcarce a trace remains,
And ſcarce one veſtige Nature's face retains.

Oblivion

Oblivion broods upon the levell'd lawn,
And fly the tints by Hiſtory's pencil drawn.
The turf-grown Palace ſhews no antique tower;
Nor wail the Loves in ROSAMONDA's Bower:
A SPRING alone preſerves her ill-ſtarr'd name,
Recals her beauty, and confirms her ſhame;
Thus ARETHUSA rolls recording waves,
And where ſhe ſhone, the peaceful precincts laves.

But let not Fancy droop, or Genius grieve,
That ancient ſcenes no bold impreſſion leave.
Though ALBION's kings relinquiſh WOODSTOCK's ſhades,
Their partial preſence ſtill our ſpirits glades;
And GEORGE and CHARLOTTE, brighteſt, happieſt pair!
Have own'd the magic of theſe objects fair:—
Have felt the charm of Beauty link'd with Taſte;
And Worth congenial to their own embrac'd *.

Lift the rapt eye! ſee ſtately BLENHEIM riſe,
And point ſublime her turrets to the ſkies.

* Alluding to the Royal Viſit in 1786.

Imperial BLENHEIM! in whoſe ample round,
United ſtrength and majeſty are found;
At once the monument of arms and arts,
The Hero's meed, the pledge of BRITISH hearts;
Till Time's remoteſt ſtage, deſign'd to prove,
A CHURCHILL's valour, and a Nation's love.
What ſplendid columns ſhine in maſſy rows,
With how much art the chiſſel's labour glows!
What dædal ſkill in every part appears,
While ARCHITECTURE, pleas'd, her head uprears,
And boaſts the vigour of a VANBRUGH's mind,
As ANNA's bounty, vaſt, and unconfin'd!
And could my Verſe pourtray each work of taſte,
With the ſame charms their beauties fire my breaſt,
Attention, rapt, would liſten to my ſong,
And Time's laſt voice the living notes prolong:
But who can count the dew-drops on the ſpray,
Or twinkling lights that ſtrew the Milky Way?

Who can embrace all Science' ſacred lore,
Unlock her ſprings, and riſe all her ſtore?
Here PAINTING ſhews the wonders of her art,
Gains on the ſenſe, and captivates the heart;
From mimic Pencils new creations riſe,
Start into life, and wear it's native dyes;
Bold as the form PROMETHEUS taught to move,
When Heaven's dread lightning he withdrew from JOVE.
Hail, ye great Artiſts! whoſe enchanting ſkill
Can mould the Paſſions, and controul the Will:
Not to the Eye your labours are addreſt,—
They boaſt an influence o'er the human Breaſt;
For while, entranc'd, each happy touch we view,
The MORAL SENSE becomes reform'd by you:
Beauty and Order, Harmony and Eaſe,
Unite to poliſh, as they tend to pleaſe.
Here BRUSSELS' looms their boaſted ſkill diſplay,
And tapeſtry armies ſtand in long array.
The vivid tints with War's dread horrors burn:
Here, Grief and Shame; there, Rage and Fury turn;

The lengthen'd march, the ramparts riſe to ſight,
And all the kindling glories of the fight.
Warm'd into life, immortal CHURCHILL glows,
And deals deſtruction on BRITANNIA's foes;
The patriot ardour gliſtens in his face;—
Fair ALBION's ſons diſplay their native grace;
While humbled FRANCE a deadly pale o'er-
ſhades,
Dim riſe her Chiefs, her meteor ſplendour fades:—
TALLARD a captive—numbers find a grave,
And numbers ſink beneath the ISTRIAN wave.
Her monarch's buſt with emblems compaſs'd
round,
From TOURNAY torn, is rais'd on BRITISH
ground;
A glorious trophy to the victor's fame,—
A laſting record of the GALLIC ſhame.
See, where the ſedgy GLYME inglorious ſtray'd,
The ſpacious lake extend, the white caſcade!
See bold RIALTOS verdant hills conjoin,
And chaſten'd Taſte confirm each fair deſign!
See waving woods their aged arms diſplay,
And quivering ſun-beams ſhed a partial day;

Long

Long viſtas ſhooting from the wondering eyes,
And bloom perennial pour unnumber'd dyes!
See flower-crown'd FLORA ſpread her lucid train,
And give to BEAUTY all the ſmiling plain;
While ſylvan PAN, amid the ſhady trees,
Joins in the concert with the ſwelling breeze.
Elyſian Scene! by noble SPENCER lov'd,
Whoſe taſte completes what Nature had approv'd.
By him, yon groves the ruſſet ſlopes adorn,
That catch the golden tinge of early morn;
By him, the bloſſom'd ſhrub, the blooming flower,
From blended ſweets reviving incenſe pour;
By him, the cryſtal lake is taught to ſtray,
Where yielding valleys point a ready way;
By him, the rough caſcade, with deafening roar,
To liquid elements deſcribes a ſhore;
While winds the whiten'd wave through flowery meads,
And ſilver ſwans diſport among the reeds.
Illuſtrious Name! to every virtue dear,
Whom all the good muſt love, the bad revere:

Unwarp'd

Unwarp'd by Grandeur's ſoft, ſeductive lure,
And arm'd by Reaſon, from her arts ſecure;
For once, from wild Caprice, kind Fortune free,
Showers down her choiceſt gifts, unblam'd, on thee.

'Tis not thy titles that command our love,
'Tis not thy ſplendour that the wiſe approve;
But 'tis thy native worth, thy noble mind,
That glows with charity for all mankind!

Wealth, power, and titles—pageants of a day,
Ungrac'd with merit, ſhed a feeble ray.
Soon ſinks the fame, not rais'd on true deſert,
And all the praiſe, that lives not in the heart;
Soon ſinks the pride from anceſtry that flows:—
The ſplendid villains are but public ſhows;
Awhile they blaze, and catch the ſimple eye,
Then melt in air, like meteors in the ſky!
Not thus Nobility, with Worth conjoin'd,
It's luſtre ſpreads, and leaves a track behind.
The gifts of Fortune in a good man's power,
Are but the friendleſs wretch's certain dower;

They

They raiſe the languid, wipe Affliction's tear—
Such, noble MARLBOROUGH! ſhine thy bounties here.
Thrice happy Man! whom rural honours pleaſe,
The charms of Science, and the ſweets of Eaſe.
Bleſt with a RUSSEL's love, in whom combine
The ſplendid virtues of her noble line;
Bleſt with an offspring, lovely as the day
That opes the roſy morn of gentle May;
You hear, unmov'd, Ambition's ſounding call,
Mark her ſteep progreſs, and avoid her fall:
State's gilded trappings to the vain you leave,
Nor court the plaudits which the bold receive;—
The trueſt Patriot in the Man is ſeen,
From each extreme you keep the golden mean.
With Genius warm'd, with Independence bleſt,
Your's are the joys, which Virtue loves to taſte;
The cloſe-drawn ties, the Friend, the Father knows,
The heartfelt bliſs from mutual love that flows;
The generous glow Benevolence awakes,
When cheriſh'd Merit bleſſes, and partakes.

The ardent ſun now pours meridian heat,
To leafy coverts panting herds retreat;
The rural train frequent the cryſtal ſpring,
Or, fann'd by Zephyrs, in the cool ſhade ſing;
While near yon portal, whoſe triumphal round
Opes the ſweet proſpects of Elyſian ground,
With raptur'd eye, I take my ſilent ſtand,
To paint the glowing view on every hand.
Full in the front, the palace towers ſublime,
And mocks the ravages of wreckful Time:
It's gilded orbs reflect APOLLO's ray,
And ſhed abroad an artificial day;
Low at it's feet, the verdant carpet lies,
Shrubs, trees, and flowers, in fair confuſion riſe;
While hovering Genii conſecrate the ground,
And ſpread protecting influence around.
There winds the lake through deep emboſom'd vales,
Whence winged Zephyr draws refreſhing gales.
And lo! ſublime, th'aerial column ſhews,
How CHURCHILL conquer'd, and how ſunk his foes.

The

The Roman Eagles at his feet diſpread,
Tell how GERMANIA owns his ſaving aid:
The long inſcriptions dignify his name,
And rouſe BRITANNIA's ſons to emulate his fame.
Immortal Chief! of Albion's iſle the pride,
By martial deeds to greateſt names allied,
Renown'd for valour, as for mercy lov'd,
The higheſt pitch of human bliſs you prov'd;
Gain'd the fair meed, without the conſcious ſtain,
And wore the laurel, unalloyed with pain.
Unlike thoſe peſts, who fought for fame alone,
To ſlave a nation, or to mount a throne;
You drew the ſword, the injur'd to defend,
To aid the helpleſs, and the proud to bend.
Be this your fame—nor could the favouring Nine
Grace with a praiſe, more noble, more divine.
Here WOODSTOCK, erſt amid the ſylvan ſcene *,
Lifts her high brow, and, happy, ſmiles ſerene:
WOODSTOCK, belov'd by DIAN's huntreſs train,
What time thoſe ſhades confeſs'd the Goddeſs' reign.

* It was formerly within the limits of Whichwood Foreſt.

Oft on this bank, the weary Power repos'd,
Oft to the ſtream her virgin limbs diſclos'd;
Around their queen the duteous nymphs rejoice,
Mark her keen eye, and watch her favouring voice;
Attend the ſummons, join the rapid chace,
And bear their ſpoils triumphant to this place.
Among the reſt, fair GALATEA ſhone,
Whom DIAN honour'd with the veſtal zone.
Her, midſt the woods, in early childhood loſt,
The goddeſs found, and cheriſh'd in her hoſt;
The graceful quiver deck'd her youthful ſide,
Her ſnowy hands the feather'd ſhafts ſupply'd.
Firſt in the chace, unrivall'd in the dance,
Skill'd or to ſing, or dart the quivering lance;
From faireſt nymphs ſhe bore away the prize,
And wak'd pale Envy in the brighteſt eyes.
To rooted Malice, pining Envy turns,
With fell revenge each ſickening boſom burns;
Each look was watch'd, each word explain'd away,
And foul-mouth'd Slander ſtain'd her brighteſt day.

Inventive

Inventive SCANDAL tells her ſoothing tale,
Imputed crimes DIANA's ears aſſail;
But ſtill the goddeſs heard the tale with ſcorn,
And ſtill freſh wreaths her favourite's brows adorn.
It chanc'd, one day, the chace was long and hot,
Each nymph was tir'd, and ſought the cooling grot;
DIANA ey'd them with a parent's care,
Alone her beſt-lov'd maid was wanting there.
A cruel ſmile now plays on every face,
And buzzing Scandal fills the ſacred place:
This feigns, whom GALATEA ſtray'd to meet;—
That, lays an ardent lover at her feet;—
Another dwells on every deed of ſhame,
And points to views which virgins ſhould not name.
All urge their ſuit—the fair is doom'd to fall,
Should Diſobedience wait DIANA's call.
The winding horn alarm'd the foreſt round,
No voice reſponſive echo'd to the ſound—
A furious boar ſhe urg'd with fatal zeal,
And chas'd him, foaming, with reſiſtleſs ſteel;

Far from the uſual haunts ſhe eager ſtray'd,
Nor heard the ſummons of the DELIAN maid.
Reſentment, quick, uſurps the place of love,
And thrice DIANA ſwore, by Stygian JOVE,
To pour down vengeance on the wandering fair,
And blaſt her, heedleſs, in her wild career.
The goddeſs ſpoke—her great revenge decrees—
Each eye beams pleaſure, and each voice agrees.
Transform'd to ECHO, GALATEA mourns,
And ſtill with fruitleſs care the call returns.
Deep in yon hill, the pining virgin dwells,
And floods with ceaſeleſs tears her darkſome cells;
But, doom'd by DIAN's wrath, her vocal tongue
Paints the gay pleaſures of the ſportive young;
Dwells on the joys her fate forbids to taſte,
Or ſoothes with kindred voice the wretch's breaſt.
Oft, too, the ſhepherd tries her mimic powers,
When ſable night unfolds it's tranquil hours;
And oft, the ſtranger ſtarts, and wildly hears
Her frequent murmurs vibrate on his ears.
Now from the lake the cooling breezes play;
The lengthening ſhadows ſpeak declining day;

A milder

A milder glory decks the crimſon'd groves,
And paints the ſcene that Contemplation loves.
From daily toil returns the happy hind,
Peace in his eye, compoſure in his mind,
Content with Fortune's parſimonious ſtore,
And wiſe, in ignorance, to aſk no more.
The wheeling bat now trims her leather wings;
Lov'd PHILOMELA tunes her voice and ſings:
A mute attention waits her melting ſtrain,
And ſweeteſt rivals own their art is vain.
The ſcene invites—freſh beauties yet in view,
Bid me, enraptur'd, ſtill my theme purſue.
Through winding paths I gain the realms of flowers,
Where Art and Nature boaſt their blended powers;
Where MARLBRO' ſeeks to ſhun the ſultry heat,
And wooes fair Science to his ſoft retreat;
Where all the Loves in SPENCERS turn their eyes,
Crop the freſh bud, or mark it's opening dyes;
Midſt gayeſt ſweets the vacant hours beguile,
And rob and rival FLORA's richeſt ſpoil.

Bring every flower from Truth's perennial bed,
To weave a crown for CAROLINA's * head:
Depict each virtue beaming from her eye,
Fond love, firm faith, and mild complacency;
Let every grace and every charm be ſeen,
All that we love in BRITAIN's ſacred Queen:
All that in CHARLOTTE can delight, endear,
Then ſhall each heart confeſs the likeneſs here.

Onward I paſs—the white caſcade appears,
The ſound of waters ruſhes on mine ears:
Down the ſteep fall devolve the foaming tides,
Unfading verdure clothes th' aſpiring ſides.
Emblem of life! where waves on waves ariſe,
While Hope looks up, and views ſerener ſkies;
Where ſtill the troublous ſea inceſſant roars,
And ſtill Hope flatters, as we eye the ſhores.

Happy the man! to whom the breath of Heaven
A well-tun'd ſoul—a temper'd mind has given.
Happy the man! whoſe ſentimental breaſt
To every bleſſing gives a higher zeſt;

* Ducheſs of Marlborough.

On

On every charm a brighter luſtre throws,
And adds new ſweetneſs to the damaſk roſe.
He from each object draws ſome healing balm,—
From each fair ſcene ſome antidote to calm;
Finds ART and NATURE in their every guiſe,
Fraught with attractions to enchant his eyes;
Enjoys the treaſures that the rich poſſeſs,
And makes their ſplendor miniſter to bleſs.
Such be my mind! Alas, my prayer is vain:
I feel the good, but ſtill recur to pain.
No envy waſtes me for another's wealth,
His weal, his fortune, happineſs, or health;
No ſordid paſſions o'er my ſoul prevail,
Yet Bliſs abjures to waft me on its gale.
For I have known the ills that life moleſt,
The frame too tender,—the too feeling breaſt;—
The ſenſe too nice—the warm ingenuous glow
That ſpurns at vice, yet pants to heal its woe:
For I have known the fondeſt, deareſt ties
Torn from my heart, and raviſh'd from my eyes;
In ſorrow ſunk, hung o'er my children's grave,
And wail'd whom PROVIDENCE refus'd to ſave.

Yon noble fountain, in the valley plac'd,
Allures my ſteps, and ſpeaks ITALIA's taſte.
There River-gods reclin'd at eaſe explore
A ſcene more lovely than their native ſhore;
Confeſs HESPERIA boaſts no charms that vie
With the bright landſcapes which around them lie.
Long had this fabric preſs'd th' inglorious ground,
Each beauteous ſculpture felt of Time the wound,
The mangled Figures prov'd the vulgar ſcorn,
Toſs'd into corners, uſeleſs and forlorn.
Great SPENCER ſaw—he bade the pile aſcend,
Each part reſume it's office and it's end;
The marble gods enjoy their deſtin'd ſeat;
The ſpacious baſon open at their feet.
Now the grand whole, the eyes of Taſte detains,
And one more beauty decorates theſe plains.
With haſty ſtep I quit the vale below,
And gain the Lodge that crowns the mountain's brow,
Where dying WILMOT caught Religion's flame,
And breath'd contrition for a life of ſhame:

Con-

Condemn'd his wit, revok'd his follies paſt,
And fix'd his anchor on the ſkies at laſt.
Enchanting ſite! Hence every rural ſweet,
And every natural charm, delight to meet.
Hence, to the eye, the landſcape opens wide;
The dancing ſpirits roll a quicker tide.
Around new objects prompt th' excurſive lay;
The gently winding ſtream, the meadow gay;
The ſmiling village, ſunk in leafy ſhades,
That juſt unfolds it's low roofs through the glades;
The ſplendid ſeat, the tower, the ſhining ſpire,
And hills that catch the ſun's departing fire;
The ſylvan ſcene, where erſt, in fairer days,
To NATURE's charms I pour'd the heartfelt lays*:
OXONIA's fanes, of every art the ſeat,
Of every Muſe the lov'd, the bleſt retreat;
Where worth and learning in a BATHURST's mind
With kindeſt manners, nobleſt ſenſe are join'd.

* See Ode to Nature, written in Whichwood Foreſt.

Where

Where tuneful WARTON theſe weak warblings hears,
Nor lends to decent ſtrains faſtidious ears.
The grateful heart to SMITH with ardour turns,
For whom affection undiminiſh'd burns,
Friend of my health, and patron firſt rever'd,
And ſtill by kindneſs as concern endear'd.
O may fair SCIENCE in theſe precincts ſmile,
And ſhed her luſtre o'er this happy iſle:
To guard the laws, religion's flame maintain,
Still may worth iſſue from her foſtering reign.
Rais'd as a barrier 'gainſt th' inſidious band,
Here may the Chriſtian chieftains take their ſtand;
Repel the arrows of the threat'ning foe,
And bring the champions of confuſion low.
For atheiſts dark, and irreligion looſe,
Pour pointleſs wit, or ſeaſon rank abuſe;
Dare the dread SOVEREIGN in his high abode,
And mock the vengeance of a jealous GOD.

And

And worſe than they—a train, with learning blind,
Would ſcan OMNISCIENCE, and explore his mind;
From Scripture move th' authenticating ſeal,
And wreſt its maxims to their partial zeal;
Find a new track, abjure the faithful guide,
And ruſh on heaven with arrogance and pride.
But tir'd the Muſe, ſhe droops her vagrant wing,
Nordares on themes of high import to ſing;
Content to ſkim the ſcene with haſtening eye,
Which future bards ſhall equal to the ſky;
With happier verſe ſecure eternal fame,
When loſt, perhaps, my numbers and my name.

A Plan of Blenheim Palace, Gardens, Park, Plantations, &c the Seat of His Grace the Duke of Marlborough Oxon, Survey'd & Drawn by Thos. Pride, Land-Surveyor, 1789.

Comborough Bridge
Long Acre Mead
Combe Gate
Combe Green Gate
Combe Field
The Paddocks
To Bath
To Witney
To Ingham
Handborough Farm
Long Acre Bridge
High Lodge
Stonesfield Gate
To Blandford Lodge
Gorrel Gate
Moor
River Evenlode
Woodstock Farm House
North Lodge
Rosamonds Well
Grand Bridge
Blenheim
Pillar
Ditchley
To Worcester
Ditchley Gate
Remains of Akeman-Street
Blatton Gate
Kitchen Garden
Q. Eliza Island
Rosamonds Bath
Old Woodstock
D'Mays Academy
The Gyme
To Buckingham
Eagle Gate
The Groves
Campsfield
From Oxford
HENSINGTON
Woolton Gate
Worcester & Birmingham
WOOTTON
BLADON

a Grand Cascade
b Fountain
c Temple of Diana
d New Temple
e Flower Garden
f Shepherds Cot
g Conservatory
h Lower Cascade

i Triumphal Gate
k Chaucer's House
l Farm appendages
m Church
n Town Hall

A Scale of Furlongs each 40 Poles.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 One Mile.

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NEW DESCRIPTION

OF

BLENHEIM,

THE SEAT OF

HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

NEW DESCRIPTION OF BLENHEIM.

THE Palace or Caſtle of BLENHEIM, one of the moſt magnificent piles of architecture in this kingdom, and perhaps in the whole world, ſtands in the fineſt part of one of the fineſt counties in England, within half a mile of the borough of New Woodſtock; diſtant about eight miles from the Univerſity of Oxford, and ſixty-four from London. The ſurrounding country is fertile and irriguous, adorned with woods, and

abounding with ſeats of the nobility and gentry; the air is pure, mild, and ſalubrious; and all the neceſſaries and many of the elegancies of life are plentiful and choice.

BLENHEIM was built at the public expence, in the reign of Queen ANNE, by whom, with the concurrence of Parliament, which voted half a million for its completion, it was conferred, together with the annexed demeſnes, on the moſt illuſtrious JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH, as a teſtimony of royal favour and national gratitude for his tranſcendent ſervices, and the many ſignal victories he had gained over the French and Bavarians, particularly that near the village of Blenheim, on the banks of the Danube, from which this noble palace receives its name. This victory being atchieved on the ſecond day of Auguſt, 1704,

it

it was enacted, "That on the ſame day of every year for ever, the inheritors of his Grace's honours and titles ſhould render at WINDSOR to her Majeſty, her heirs and ſucceſſors, one ſtandard or colours, with three fleurs-de-lis painted thereon, as an acquittance for all manner of rents, ſuits, and ſervices, due to the Crown."

The architect of Blenheim was SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, who, though he has perhaps been juſtly blamed for the heavineſs of his general deſigns, muſt at leaſt ſtand acquitted in this inſtance, when it is conſidered that ſtrength and durability were principal objects to be regarded, in a pile intended to remain a monument of Britiſh valour and Britiſh generoſity, till the remoteſt periods of time. Accordingly we find both the plan and the execution excellently adapted to

anſwer thoſe momentous purpoſes; and while the more modern and ſhewy fabrics are only the boaſt of an age, Blenheim ſeems calculated to ſtand uninjured by the lapſe of years, and to excite the admiration of foreigners as well as natives, in proportion as it is better known.

But Vanbrugh does not ſtand in need of the poor compliment of an apology for his deſign,—he deſerves very conſiderable applauſe for his judgment in a circumſtance which has chiefly expoſed him to the cenſure of pretended critics: he has rendered this ſtructure characteriſtic and expreſſive of its deſtination. Its maſſy grandeur, its ſpacious portals, and its lofty towers, recal the ideas of defence and ſecurity; with theſe we naturally aſſociate the hero for whom it was

erected,

erected, and thus find it emblematic of his talents and purſuits.

From Woodſtock, the uſual approach, we enter the park through a triumphal arch, or ſpacious portal of the Corinthian order, raiſed to the memory of John Duke of Marlborough, by Sarah his Ducheſs; and charged with the following inſcription, on the ſide next Woodſtock:

Porta haec extrvcta eſt anno poſt obitvm illvſtriſſimi
Johannis Dvcis de Marlborovgh jvſſv atqve avſpiciis
Sarae conjvgis dilectiſſimae cvi teſtamento commendavit
opera
Qvibvs vltimam ipſe manvm non impoſverat.
Qvanta fverint dvcis in rempublicam merita ingreſſo tibi
Plvribvs dicet colvmna qvam optimae conjugis pietas
poni volvit
Vt perenne eſſet ipſius gloriae ſvaeqve dilectionis
monvmentvm.
A. D. MDCCXXIII.

Towards the park is the ſubſequent tranſlation:

This gate was built the year after the death of the moſt illuſtrious
John Duke of Marlborough by order of Sarah his moſt beloved wife
To whom he left the ſole direction of the many things
That remained unfiniſhed of this fabrick.

The ſervices of this great man to his country the pillar
Will tell you which the Dutcheſs has erected for a laſting
Monument of his glory and her affection to him.

MDCCXXIII.

On entering the park, one of the moſt enchanting proſpects in nature diſcloſes itſelf to our view. The PALACE appears in front, the towers of which riſe into the horizon; on the left, part of the borough of WOODSTOCK; on the right, a broad and deep valley, through which flows a river of equal extent, with bold and winding ſhores, at a proportionate diſtance interſected, but viſibly not terminated by a BRIDGE of correſponding magnificence to the grandeur

of

of the ſcene; a ſwelling lawn, crowned with a ſuperb and lofty COLUMN, which leaves the talleſt trees that ſeem crowding round its baſe at an immenſe diſtance below, while light clumps, ſhady groves, and plantations of different ſhapes and hues ſkirt the bounding dales, or clothe the remoter ſlopes; a ſecond reach of water beyond the bridge, fringed by deep woods that riſe to the very ſummit of the oppoſite hill, and compoſe a variouſly tinted and indented ſurface of luxuriant foliage; all theſe form an aſſemblage of attractions unrivalled, and conſpire to ſtrike the eye of taſte with an irreſiſtible charm. In this ſingularly pictureſque landſcape, the beautiful and the ſublime are moſt intimately combined: all that can pleaſe, elevate, or aſtoniſh, diſplay themſelves at once; and the mind is at a loſs to

know to what ſource it is chiefly indebted for its pleaſure, or rather what is the predominant character of the objects that arreſt its attention.

At a ſmall diſtance from this portal, towards the right, is the *Centrum Phonicum*, or ſpeaker's place, of a very remarkable polyſyllabical articulate Echo; which, according to Dr. Plott, in his Natural Hiſtory of Oxfordſhire, will diſtinctly repeat ſeventeen ſyllables in a calm day, and in the night twenty: but the demolition of the ancient palace, which ſtood on the brow of the oppoſite hill, the extenſion of the river, or ſome other latent cauſe, has in ſome meaſure diminiſhed its ſurpriſing powers. However, a very ſuperior Echo may be heard by a ſpeaker ſtationed near an old cedar tree, between ROSAMOND's Well and the bridge; and it is nothing unuſual for

for thoſe who are acquainted with this circumſtance to compliment the vocal nymph with a *How do you do?* or with any other words, or even muſical ſounds, which are ſpeedily returned with amazing exactneſs of articulation, and reiterated according to the ſtillneſs of the ſurrounding ſcene.

A broad gravel-road, preſerving one uniform direction for a quarter of a mile, and gradually diverging from the ſweep of the river, conducts us towards the eaſtern gate of the Palace. This road is almoſt wholly open. On the Woodſtock ſide, only a few ſmall freſh-planted clumps appear, which aſſiſt to conceal the boundary from other points of view, and to break the line of ſome private houſes; a few trees, fancifully diſpoſed, ſkirt the ſlope, and others of a larger growth range with the ſtream on

its very edge, and afford ſome pretty glades into the water between their trunks and boughs; but their heads ſcarcely riſing above the level of the walk, they ſerve rather to vary than to hide. Near the Home Lodge, on the left, the new walk commences: it extends about a quarter of a mile under the park wall, amidſt the covert of plantations, which afford ſhelter from the winds, and ſhade from the heat.

As we advance, the proſpects diverſify, the fine rural ſcenes in the northern part of the park become more and more conſpicuous; and to the north-weſt, the eye takes in an ample field of cheerful objects over a wide extent of campaign and woodland country, to the extremity of WHICHWOOD Foreſt, which is finely contraſted with the deep umbrage

that

that overhangs the lake, and intercepts the view. This road, which is only lateral and circuitous, to avoid the ſtiffneſs of a direct approach, at laſt falls into another, which beginning at the noble entrance on the ſouth of Woodſtock, is lined by double rows of ſtately trees, and forms a beautiful and ſpacious viſta to the Palace.

By the eaſtern gate we enter an arcaded ~~tri~~quadrangle; on the right, conſiſting of offices; on the left, chiefly occupied by the THEATRE, which has been recently fitted up in a ſtyle of peculiar elegance, and with appendages correſpondent to the munificence and fortune of the owner. The ſtage is large, and is furniſhed with ten changes of ſcenery, excluſive of fixtures: the ſeats for the audience are eaſy and commodious, and capable

of accommodating two hundred perſons, without including the ſide boxes. The whole has a grand and a pleaſing effect. For an amuſement at once liberal, elegant, and inſtructive, which admits ſo many to a participation, and which leaves no ſting behind, the expence conſpicuous here cannot be deemed too profuſe, nor can that generoſity and taſte be ſufficiently praiſed that have appropriated and applied it ſo well.

From this quadrangle, we proceed into the area, where the NORTH FRONT opens to the view; a noble piece of architecture, three hundred and forty-eight feet from wing to wing, and highly ornamented, particularly in the centre.

This is the grand approach; and to it we are properly conducted over the

the valley, through which the river winds, by a magnificent bridge, of dimenſions ſuperior to the RIALTO at Venice, the diameter of its centre arch being a hundred and one feet.

Thro' which the Danube might collected pour
His ſpacious urn.

The effect of this bridge, which unites two hills, and gives an uniformity and conſiſtency to the ſcene that would otherwiſe be disjointed and complex, is peculiarly grand; and its application one of the happieſt efforts of judgment. Beyond it, on a conſiderable eminence, in the midſt of a fine lawn, is a ſtately column or pillar, one hundred and thirty feet high, on the top of which ſtands a ſtatue of the immortal John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough,

——Like

——Like a guardian God ſublime,
And awes the ſubject plain.

Every circumſtance that enters into the compoſition of the ſcene unites to promote one vaſt and beautiful effect. The north front itſelf is of ſuch magnificence as to diffuſe a luſtre on ſurrounding objects; the accompaniments are well adapted to reflect it back on the building. A fine expanſe of water ſtretches its arms around, as if proud to embrace it, approaches in a variety of directions, ſpreads its animating ſpirit over the whole, and connects together the widely extended, and extremely diverſified parts of the brilliant landſcape.

The SOUTH FRONT, though leſs extenſive, is highly elegant. It commands a calm ſcene, a view that, without

out ſurpriſing, no repetition can render indifferent; the eye reſts on it with complacency, and returns to it with delight. The fore-ground is a fine lawn, frequently covered with ſheep; the pleaſure grounds ſucceed; behind is a beautiful perſpective of the village of BLADON, juſt peeping through tufted trees; and ſtill farther, a proſpect of the diſtant hills, which breaking one before another exhibit a ſucceſſion of chains, till the laſt, a continuation of the CHILTERN Range through Berks, gradually diſſolves in the almoſt boundleſs horizon on the ſouth-weſt. Over the portico, which does credit to the Corinthian order, ſtands a coloſſal buſt of LOUIS XIV. of France, taken from the gates of Tournay; it is adorned with proper military emblems, and under it is the ſubſequent inſcription, running along the pediment:

Europæ

Europæ hæc vindex genio decora alta Britanno. *A

Which may be rendered, "*The aſſerter of the liberty of Europe dedicates theſe lofty honours to the Britiſh Genius.*"

Near the eaſtern angle, a commodious and elegant OBSERVATORY has been lately erected, amply furniſhed with the beſt aſtronomical apparatus, by the juſtly celebrated Ramſden.

* Though this inſcription has but one obvious, and can have but one conſiſtent meaning, it has nevertheleſs been tortured into various; and the ſentence without a verb has been the alternate ſtumbling-block of real ignorance and falſe criticiſm: no authorities can avail the former; the latter may be convinced of its propriety, by referring to

ÆNEAS HÆC DE DANAIS VICTORIBUS ARMA.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ ΑΠΟ ΜΗΔΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ

And to other inſtances of a ſimilar mode of expreſſion, from ſources of unqueſtionable purity.

A grand teleſcope, by Herſchell, preſented to the Duke by his Majeſty ſoon after the royal viſit to Blenheim in 1786, and now in the library, may be reckoned a very valuable appendage: another correſponding Obſervatory is now fitting up, at the weſtern angle.

The apartments of this Palace are furniſhed with princely magnificence: the tapeſtry and paintings attract univerſal and deſerved attention; but as it is impoſſible to do them adequate juſtice in any general deſcription, we ſhall conduct our readers through the grand ſuit of rooms, uſually open to public inſpection, in the order they are ſhewn, and enumerate the moſt celebrated productions of art in each.

HALL.

HALL.

Through a ſuperb portico, on maſſy Corinthian columns of elegance and dimenſions almoſt unrivalled, we enter the hall, which lies in the centre of the north, or grand front: this is alſo ſupported by fluted Corinthian pillars. The ceiling, which is the height of the building, is painted by Sir James Thornhill, and allegorically repreſents VICTORY crowning JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH, as ſhe points to a plan of the battle of BLENHEIM. The Duke is depicted in a blue Roman dreſs. Over the noble marble door-caſe that communicates with the ſaloon, is a buſt of the ſame hero, with this inſcription:

Ecce

Ecce virum ſtabiles cui gens auguſta Penates
Cui fractas tandem Gallia debet opes.
Hic veterem Angliacæ virtuti inſtaurat honorem
Seu res conſilio, ſeu ſit agenda manu.
Non animo Auguſtus melior non Julius armis
Seu mulcet gentes, ille vel ille domat.

Behold the man to diſtant nations known
Who ſhook the Gallic, fix'd the Auſtrian throne,
New luſtre to Britannia's glory gave;
In councils prudent, as in action brave.
Not Julius more in arms diſtinguiſh'd ſhin'd,
Nor could Auguſtus better calm mankind.

In the gallery on the ſame ſide may be ſeen whole length portraits of Villiers Duke of Buckingham, ſtabbed by Felton, by Myttens; of Henrietta Queen of Charles I. by Vandyke; and of Henry Rich Lord Holland, by an unknown maſter. A large collection of family portraits occupy the ſame gallery, the whole extent of the houſe. Below, in

niches near the angles, are the MEDICEAN VENUS, and the DANCING FAWN, in bronze, from the originals in the Grand Duke of Tuſcany's collection, and executed with inimitable ſkill by Maximilian Soldani Benzi, at Florence, in 1711.

The arcades on the right and left are adorned with marble termini. Below, on a black marble ſlab ſtands a fine antique DIANA and Dog, and exactly oppoſite, on a ſimilar ſlab, is a beautiful VASE with figures in relievo, from the antique.

Over the grand ſtair-caſe is a large picture, by Hudſon, of Charles Duke of Marlborough and Family; and beyond the arcades, on the other ſide of the hall, the firſt Duke and Family are delineated by the pencil of Cloſterman.

BOW-

BOW-WINDOW ROOM.

From the hall, we proceed along a paſſage to the bow-window room. The famous battle of BLENHEIM is pourtrayed in the tapeſtry on the right at entrance, and occupies a conſiderable ſpace. The principal action is confined to the taking of Marſhal Tallard. The battle of WYNENDAEL is repreſented in the tapeſtry on the left.

Over the firſt door is an Aſtronomer and Family, very fine, by Dobſon. Over the chimney, a moſt capital original picture, by Raphael, of the Virgin and Child; St. John and St. Nicholas, formerly belonging to the Capella degli Anſidei at Perrugia.

On a pannel to the right.

A fine Head after Han. Caracci, by Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

A Head of Lady Anne Churchill, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

A ſmall picture of the Aſſumption, by Tintoret.

A female Head, by Reubens.

Two Monkies in the habit of Monks, by Teniers.

A Madona and Child, by Lionardo da Vinci.

Over the ſecond door are two Nymphs, by an uncertain maſter.

Between two beautiful fluted Corinthian pillars, another portrait of Lady Anne Churchill, by Kneller.

A ſmall pendent cabinet, with a miniature Painting, by Lady Car. Spencer.

On the next pannel.

An

An elegant engraving of the Princeſs Mary, by Miſs Car. Watſon.

A beautiful etching of a Wood Nymph, by the Princeſs Royal; given to her Grace the Ducheſs of Marlborough, by her Royal Highneſs.

An allegorical original Drawing, by Cipriani, intended as a frontiſpiece to the ſecond volume of the Gemmæ Marlburienſes Selectæ.

Between the oppoſite pillars.

A portrait of Prince Eugene.

An elegant engraving of the Marquis of Taviſtock, by Watſon.

On the next pannel.

The Princeſs Sophia, by Miſs Caroline Watſon.

An Etching, by the Princeſs Royal.

An original Drawing, by Cipriani, the frontiſpiece to the firſt volume of

the Gemmæ Marlburienſes: the ſubject from Pliny's Nat. Hiſt.

Over the third door, a Battle Piece, by Wovermans.

The ceiling is painted in a novel ſtile of ſimple elegance, and adorned with military emblems, by Hakeville. The window curtains and furniture are blue ſilk damaſk. Under the mirrors that adorn the pannels between the windows, are two marble ſlabs, on each of which is a ſleeping figure, very expreſſively ſculptured in white marble. At the other end of the room are two elegant cabinets.

DUKE's DRESSING ROOM.

The decorations of this apartment are rather elegant than ſplendid; the hangings are ſtraw-coloured flock paper,

per, with a rich border; the furniture is chintz.

The paintings are:

I. * 1. Venus and Adonis, by an uncertain artiſt; a Magdalen, by young Palma; our Saviour in the Virgin's lap, crowning two female Martyrs, by Titian; St. Mark penning his Goſpel, by old Palma.

2. Inſide view of a Church, by Steenwyck; a proſpect of a Spaniſh Sea Port, by Weenix; the Deſtruction of Pharaoh and his Hoſt in the Red Sea, by old Frank.

* The Roman numerals I. II. III. refer to the three ſides of the apartment, beginning at the left: the fourth, and in the grand cabinet the third, is occupied by the windows and the mirrors. The Arabic characters 1, 2, expreſs the upper and lower rows of pictures on the ſame ſide. When the arrangement would not ſuffer this eaſy mode of diſtinction, the figures are omitted.

II. 1. Two Beggar Boys, very characteriſtic, by Murillio; Eſther and Ahaſuerus, by Paul Veroneſe; three Beggar Boys, by Murillio.

III. 1. A Holy Family, very fine, by Reubens; Charles Earl of Sunderland, by Kneller; King George I. by an unknown artiſt; Sleeping Venus and Satyr, with attending Cupids, from the ſchool of Reubens.

2. A view of Althorpe, the ſeat of Earl Spencer, by Tilleman.

Over the chimney are two antique metal jars. Under the glaſs, a pair of elegant globes, by Adams.

EAST DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings and furniture crimſon damaſk; the ceiling a ſlight plain dome, of an oval ſhape; the chimney-

piece

piece is compoſed of the richeſt veined marble. Many of the paintings are very capital.

I. 1. A Holy Family, ſuppoſed by Raphael; the Marchioneſs de Havre; the Ducheſs of Buckingham and Offspring; Mary of Medicis; all by Vandyke.

2. An oval portrait of King William III. by Sir Godfrey Kneller; a Man's Head, by Titian; another Head, by Holbein; the Annunciation, by Corregio; an oval portrait of Lady Cheſterfield, by Vandyke.

II. 1. Philip II. King of Spain, a whole length, by Titian; a moſt capital and ſtrikingly characteriſtic BACCHANALIAN PIECE, by Reubens; Andromeda chained to the rock, by the ſame.

2. The Offering of the Magi, by Reubens; a French Camp, by Watteau;

teau; a ſmall pendent cabinet, with miniatures of the preſent Family; two ſmall Landſcapes, by a French artiſt; Cattle, by Roſa di Tivoli; two correſponding ſmall Landſcapes, as before; another correſponding cabinet, incloſing miniatures; a Landſcape, by Paul Brylle.

III. 1. A charming picture, by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, repreſenting Lady Charlotte Spencer, in the character of a Gipſey, telling her brother, Lord Henry, his fortune; Reubens, Wife, and Child, by Reubens, a preſent to the firſt Duke, by the city of Bruſſels. Charles I. by Vandyke; a Holy Family, ſuppoſed by Raphael, in his firſt ſtile of painting, a preſent from the town of Ghent.

2. Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. by Vandyke; an Angel, ſmall, by Corregio; Cattle and Figures, by Wovermans; a Landſcape, ſmall,

by

by Claude Lorrain; a broad Day-break, very fine, by Vandermeer.

GRAND CABINET.

This magnificent apartment opens to the eaſt and ſouth, and enjoys the moſt charming ſcenery. The hangings and furniture are rich crimſon damaſk, with gilding of correſponding ſplendor: the cornice, in particular, is extremely elegant, and in the centre of the ceiling is a large circular gilt plume. The chimney is compoſed of dark-coloured marble, inlaid with white, in ornamental feſtoons, with an urn, projecting in relievo, which has a delightful effect; over it ſtand the liſtening Slave, and a crouching Venus in bronze, and between them two very curious jars.

The paintings are ſome of the moſt ſuperb in any collection.

I. 1. A Holy Family, by Reubens; a Madona ſtanding on a globe, ſurrounded by Angels, by Carlo Maratti; the Offering of the Magi, by Reubens.

2. A moſt capital picture of our Saviour bleſſing the Children, by Reubens.

II. 1. Filial Affection, exemplified in the Roman Daughter, by Reubens; the Return of our Saviour from Egypt, by Reubens; Lot's Departure out of Sodom, by Reubens, a preſent from the town of Antwerp.

2. Portrait of Paracelſus, by Reubens; a Virgin, her head encircled with ſtars, ſuppoſed the Mraculous Conception, in the fineſt ſtile, by Carlo Dolce; Raphael's favourite

Dorothea,

Dorothea, by himſelf; head of Reubens, by the ſame; Pope Gregory and a Female Penitent bearing a palm branch, by Titian; a Holy Family, by Ludovico Caracci.

BLUE DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings are blue damaſk, with ornamental gilt bordures: the furniture correſponding. The head in the centre of the chimney is a fine piece of ſculpture: the whole is delicately finiſhed in white marble. The large gilt branches on each ſide above are peculiarly elegant.

The paintings are:

I. 1. Iſaac bleſſing Jacob, by Rembrandt; an oval in claro obſcuro, very expreſſive, from an ancient gem, by Rebecca.

II. 1. Ca-

II. 1. Catherine of Medicis, in colours, almoſt inimitable, by Reubens; Time clipping Cupid's wings, an allegorical painting, by Vandyke; William Marquis of Blandford, by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

2. A Landſcape, by Vandermeer; a Dutch Family, by Oſtade; a Landſcape, by Gaſpard Pouſſin; Dorothy Counteſs of Sunderland, painted by Vandyke, but immortalized by Waller; another Landſcape, by Gaſpard Pouſſin; a ſmall highly finiſhed Family Piece, by Gonzales; a beautiful little Landſcape, by Wovermans.

III. 1. Ladies Caroline and Elizabeth Spencer, by Romney; the latter is repreſented as playing on her harp, the former in the act of taking a ſketch of her ſiſter: on the right of which are two Heads of young Women, by Paul Veroneſe; on the left, our Saviour,

Saviour, and St. John, by Carlo Dolce; the Woman taken in Adultery, by Rembrandt.

2. Our Saviour and the Virgin in the clouds, with a Monk paying adoration, by Hannibal Caracci; our Saviour and the Virgin in the clouds, with accompaniments, by Tintoret; a brilliant collection of thirty-six miniatures of different magnitudes, among which are three of the beautiful and unfortunate MARY Queen of SCOTS; a Holy Family, by Ludovico Caracci; Cattle and Figures, by Bambocchio.

WINTER DRAWING ROOM.

The tapestry hangings of this apartment represent the four CARDINAL VIRTUES, with their characteristic emblems and accompaniments,

and

and in vivid beauty of colouring approach nearer to painting than any thing of the ſame kind in Blenheim.

I. FORTITUDE, with proper inſignia. The man wrenching open the lion's jaws is extremely expreſſive.

II. On one ſide of the chimney, PRUDENCE, holding a mirror in her left hand, in the action of viewing the conduct of others, that ſhe may be the better able to regulate her own; in the right, a dart entwined with a remora, the reſpective emblems of ſpeed and delay, between which Prudence obſerves a middle courſe.

On the other ſide of the chimney, JUSTICE, with her balance and ſword, and other diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics.

III. TEMPERANCE, with her curb. The River God pouring water out of his

his urn, is finely imagined, and attracts the notice of every ſpectator.

The only paintings are, an animated one of Lord Stafford and his Secretary, over the firſt door; a very beautiful portrait of Mary Ducheſs of Richmond, with a little Girl preſenting her gloves, over the chimney; and of Mrs Morton and Mrs. Killigrew, two of Charles II.'s favourites, over the other door: all by Vandyke.

In the centre of the very elegant chimney-piece, formed of the richeſt marbles, is an alto relievo of Cupid and Pſyche's Marriage, from the antique. A notification in Greek characters is prefixed, that Tryphon executed the original. Over, are two Centaurs in bronze, and two beautiful urns of Derbyſhire ſpar.

In this room alſo are ſmall bronzes of Cupids, and Hercules killing the

Centaurs. The mirrors are ſingularly ſuperb.

DINING ROOM.

It is well adapted for its deſtination, being large, lofty, and commodiouſly ſituated. The ceiling is richly ſtuccoed, and the ſides are wainſcotted in large pannels, painted white. The chimney-piece is peculiarly handſome: it ſupports an elegant clock, mounted on an elephant in bronze, and crowned with an American Indian.

The productions of the pencil are:

I. 1. Cattle and Figures, in a very capital ſtile, by Caſtiglione; a Bacchanalian Piece, by Vandyke.

II. 1. Lot and his Daughters, very fine, by Reubens, a preſent from the

the Emperor of Germany; the Princeſs of Denmark, afterwards Queen Anne, by Sir Godfrey Kneller; Venus and Adonis, by Reubens, another preſent from the Emperor.

III. The preſent DUKE, DUCHESS, and SIX CHILDREN—Ladies Caroline, Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Anne; the Marquis of Blandford, and Lord Henry: the two youngeſt, LORD FRANCIS and LADY AMELIA, were born ſince this very capital picture (which coſt ſeven hundred guineas) was painted by Sir Joſhua Reynolds. The Rape of Europa, by Paul Veroneſe.

On the pannels near the windows, at each end, are three ſmall Landſcapes, by Wootton.

SALOON.

This noble apartment is highly finiſhed, and richly decorated: it is

lined in the lower part with marble in the Italian taſte, and its four door-caſes are entirely compoſed of the ſame beautiful and durable material. Over each door, which face the four quarters, are the arms of the firſt Duke. Above the marble baſement are ſix compartments, in which, different nations of the world are depicted in their characteriſtic dreſſes and expreſſions, by La Guerre. Theſe however are rather caricatures than natural delineations: they are ſhewn in the following manner, and ſaid to repreſent,

I. The Painter,—French—Engliſh, and Scotch.

II. Spaniards.

III. Moors and Negroes.

IV. Chineſe and Tartars.

V. Turks.

VI. Dutch and Swedes.

The

The ceiling is the height of the building, and executed by the ſame artiſt with a felicity both in deſign and performance. It emblematically repreſents JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH in the career of victory arreſted by the hand of PEACE, while TIME reminds him of the rapidity of his own flight.

Over the firſt chimney ſtands an antique buſt of a Roman Conſul; and at the ſame end of the room, a marble ſlab with a Sleeping Venus.

Over the ſecond chimney is an antique buſt of Caracalla; and on another marble ſlab, Cleopatra and the Aſp.

GREEN DRAWING ROOM.

It is hung with tapeſtry, repreſenting in vivid colours ſome of the mi-

litary exploits of John Duke of Marlborough.

I. Battle of Dunnewert.

II. Battle of Liſle, on the right of the chimney; Siege of Liſle on the left. The French ſpy is very expreſſively delineated.

III. Battle of Malplaquet. The eager attention of the perſon receiving orders, is admirably drawn.

Over the firſt door is a charming portrait of a young Knight of St. John of Jeruſalem, by Barrocio; over the oppoſite door, a very maſterly painting of Meleager and Atalanta, by Reubens.

On a pannel near the window at entrance, is the Adoration of the Shepherds, by Lucca Giordano.

A Madona and Child, by Nich. Pouſſin.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers, by Rottenhammer.

On the oppoſite pannel.

The Offering of the Magi, by Lucca Giordano.

A Holy Family, by Nich. Pouſſin.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers, by Rottenhammer.

A moſt beautiful and curious Clock on a new conſtruction, by Vulliamy, ſtands on the chimney piece. A Serpent bending down its head from the top of a ſmall urn, round which the hours are arranged, points out the time with its ſting; and on the ſame urn, an elegant figure of CONTEMPLATION leaning, gives the whole a ſingular, and rather monumental air. On each ſide are Boys Gambols in bronze.

Above is a highly finiſhed and inexpreſſibly attractive picture of her

Grace the DUCHESS of Marlborough, in an elegant white dreſs, by Romney.

On the marble ſlabs under the windows are bronzes of Fame and Mercury mounted on Pegaſi.

The curtains, ſophas, and other furniture, are deep green damaſk.

STATE DRAWING ROOM.

This apartment has been recently decorated, and furniſhed with the utmoſt magnificence. The ceiling is elegant; the cornice richly gilt; and the bordure round the room is in a correſponding ſtile. The mirrors are almoſt unrivalled in the ſuperlative elegance of their frames—the magnitude of their plates is likewiſe very conſiderable.

The chimney is of the whiteſt marble,

marble: it is adorned with a ſmall central urn, ſupported by two griffins; theſe likewiſe are part of the embelliſhments of the glaſſes; they belong to the family arms. The marble ſlabs are proportionate to the ſplendor of the reſt. A highly finiſhed cabinet at the lower end ſupports a rich luſtre. The curtains and furniture are white damaſk.

One of the principal ornaments however of the room is a moſt ſuperb picture of HIS GRACE of Marlborough, in his garter robes, by Romney: it is placed over the chimney. From this beautiful painting, Jones has executed a very happy mezzotinto: another of the Ducheſs would be an acceptable preſent to the public. The prints of the theatric characters, painted by Roberts, are finiſhed by the ſame ingenious artiſt.

The

The tapeſtry is a continuation of the firſt Duke's atchievements.

I. and II. The March to Bouchain.

II. and III. The Siege of Bouchain. In this piece, Lord Cadogan's Dog, which attended his maſter through the wars, and returned ſafe, makes a conſpicuous figure.

Over the firſt door is a Fruit Piece, by Lucca Giordano.

Over the oppoſite door, St. Laurence diſtributing the ornaments of the altar, by Il Prete Genoeſe.

STATE BED CHAMBER.

In a palace there muſt be apartments for pomp as well as for utility; this is one of the former, and very ſplendid of the kind. The furniture and hangings are rich blue damaſk, interlaced with gold. The bed-poſts are elegantly

elegantly fluted, and covered with burniſhed gold: their extremities adorned with military emblems. The top riſes into a dome, ſurmounted with a ducal coronet; at the head are the family arms.

The chimney-piece is decorated with bronzes of Hercules killing the Centaurs, and the Hydra; between theſe is a buſt of Diana; over it is a capital picture, by Lucca Giordano, repreſenting Seneca bleeding to death, while with philoſophic compoſure he dictates to his amanuenſes.

On a pannel to the right is a portrait of Edward VI. by Holbein.

A view of Architecture, by Panini.

The Burning of Troy, by old Frank.

Over each door is a piece of ſtill life, by Malteſe.

From this ſtately ſuit of rooms, where the profuſion of ſplendid objects

jects is apt to dazzle the organs of ſight, the eye is both charmed and relieved on entering

THE LIBRARY.

This very ſpacious apartment, which occupies the entire weſt front, is two hundred feet long, and thirty-one feet nine inches wide in the centre.

It is impoſſible to conceive any thing more ſuperb than the ſolid columns of marble, which ſupport a rich entablature, the Doric pilaſters of the ſame, the ſurrounding baſement of black marble, and the ſtuccoed compartments of the lofty vaulted ceiling, which open a fine field for the pencil of the firſt maſter.

This noble room was originally intended as a gallery for paintings; but has ſince been furniſhed with the grand SUNDERLAND collection of

of books, compriſing upwards of twenty thouſand volumes, in various languages, arts, and ſciences; all arranged in commodious caſes with latticed doors, on the eaſt ſide through its whole extent, and the two ends.

At the upper end of the library ſtands a highly finiſhed white marble ſtatue of QUEEN ANNE, in her coronation robes, by Ryſbrack; on the pedeſtal is this inſcription:

To the Memory of Queen ANNE!
Under whoſe Auſpices
John Duke of MARLBOROUGH
conquered,
And to whoſe Munificence
He and his Poſterity
With Gratitude
Owe the Poſſeſſion of BLENHEIM.
A. D. MDCCXXVI.

In

In a receſs on the weſt ſide, is an antique ſtatue, inſcribed JULIA DOMNA; and lower down, another of DIANA and Dog, both on mahogany therms.

At the lower end is a buſt of ALEXANDER the Great; a fine ſpecimen of Grecian ſculpture, in good preſervation, dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum; and ſupported by an elegant modern therm.

Over the book-caſes on the eaſt ſide are the ſubſequent paintings and ſculptures:

Lord Godolphin.

Duke of Montague.

Above the firſt chimney, a buſt of Charles Earl of Sunderland, the collector of the books: beneath a ſea piece of Jonah and the Whale, after Pouſſin: on the chimney, a buſt of the Emperor Adrian.

Counteſs

Counteſs of Sunderland.

Counteſs of Bridgwater.

Counteſs Cowper.

Hon. John Spencer.

Over the grand marble door-caſe that communicates with the hall, a buſt of Milo Crotonenſis.

Elizabeth Ducheſs of Marlborough.

Charles Duke of Marlborough.

Sarah Ducheſs of Marlborough.

John Duke of Marlborough.

Over the ſecond chimney, a Girl's Head, antique. A Landſcape, after Pouſſin; above, a buſt, of Charles Duke of Marlborough, by Ryſbrack.

Queen Anne.

King William.

From the noble bow-windows on the weſt, is an elyſian proſpect of the

the beautiful deſcent to the lake, and of the pendent grove on the oppoſite hill. Indeed every apartment has its appropriate beauties, both internal and external: the eye of diſcernment will recognize many, which the brevity of our plan prevented us from noting; to the more curſory obſerver this deſcription will prove an uſeful monitor. One ſtriking ornament however we have neglected to remark: the mahogany doors throughout this whole ſuit are ſplendidly finiſhed, and are worthy of the apartments to which they conduct.

CHAPEL.

From the library we proceed along a piazza, with arcades below, to the Chapel,

Chapel, ſituated in the weſtern wing of the palace. The coup d'œil on entering is extremely grand, and the impreſſion ſuch as correſponds with the place. The ſtile of painting, and the degree of light are both peculiarly happy: the large compartments of ſober grey are finely relieved by the ſurrounding white; and the ſhade of foliage that partially darkens the windows diffuſes an air of compoſed ſolemnity, unmixed with gloom, unaccompanied with melancholy.

The chief ornament, however, is a ſtately MONUMENT in various marble, to the memory of the firſt Duke and Ducheſs, by Ryſbrack. They are repreſented with their two Sons who died young, as ſupported by FAME and HISTORY: theſe are coloſſal figures, and being moſt prominent, are the moſt ſtriking in the

group. The pen of HISTORY ſeems to have traced this inſcription on a tablet, which ſhe holds in the other hand:

To the Memory
Of John Duke of Marlborough and
his two Sons
His Ducheſs has erected
this Monument.
In the Year of Chriſt, MDCCXXXIII.

Beneath, is the taking of Marſhal Tallard, in baſſo relievo.

The altar piece repreſents our Saviour taking down from the Croſs, by Jordaens of Antwerp.

The gallery for the family is ſplendidly hung with crimſon velvet, fringed with gold. The cuſhions are correſponding. Over the chimney is a curious painting on black marble, by Aleſſandro Veroneſe.

Having

Having remarked the moſt ſtriking beauties in this magnificent Palace, it would be impardonable to overlook the Gardens, the River, and the Park, which whether we regard the delightfulneſs of their reſpective ſituations, or the moſt captivating charms of nature, improved by the chaſteſt deſigns of art, equally demand our attention, and excite our warmeſt approbation.

GARDENS.

THE gardens or pleaſure grounds occupy an area of two hundred acres and upwards. On part of the north, and the eaſt ſide, they are ſurrounded by a ſunk fence, which without breaking the grandeur of the ſcene, ſerves to ſeparate the parts that compoſe it. On the weſt ſide, they make a bold deſcent to the lake, which

falling from a lofty precipice at the ſouth-weſt angle formed likewiſe the ſouthern boundary, before the recent additions of a conſiderable portion of the adjoining vale, and of the face of the oppoſite hill. Nature, indeed, ſeems to have placed this fine chain, which deſcribes the figure of a bow on the weſt and ſouth of the river, as the only regular termination of the pleaſure grounds, and the line of diviſion between them and the park. The lofty umbrageous trees which cover its ſide and brow form a noble back ground, and give an unity and finiſh to the ſcene. The features of the vale through which the river winds, from the caſcade as far as the new bridge, entirely correſpond with the reſt of the picture. Art might heighten them, but Nature could not have been more propitious: they invite embelliſhment from the facility with which it might be applied.

Or

Or may it not be an effect of the juſteſt taſte, to render the tranſition from the more ornamental ſtile of the garden to the firſt ſhades of the ruder majeſty of the park ſo very imperceptible, that the eye at a ſmall diſtance cannot determine where the one commences and the other ends? In animate nature, the cloſe alliance between the laſt genus of one claſs and the firſt of another has ever been conſidered as an inſtance of beauteous deſign and harmonious execution; and why may not the ſame hold good in inanimate objects! The juſt gradation of tints, and the eaſy blending of colours, are indiſputably requiſite to the compoſition of a perfect whole!

The uſual entrance into the gardens is a little to the left of the eaſtern gate of Blenheim. The EAST FRONT firſt ſalutes the view: before it ſpreads a cheerful lawn of an oblong form, extending a conſiderable way into

the park; at firſt fringed with little clumps of evergreens encircled and interſperſed with flowers and deciduous ſhrubs; then broken by a few ſcattered trees, which riſing on different ſides of the boundary effectually conceal it; and afterwards lined by ſtately trees that throw a finely chequered ſhade on the verdant ſwerd below, and ranging in irregular pomp preclude ſtiffneſs from mingling with beauty.

A walk of pebbly gravel of the moſt beautiful texture and regularity (which however prevails in the pleaſure-grounds, and blends utility with ornament) winding to the eaſt between riſing plantations, and clumps of trees and ſhrubs in various ſhapes, at intervals is opened to highly embelliſhed lawn; and ſoon taking an eaſy bend to the ſouth, conducts to a Temple as yet without a name. This ſtructure is adorned

with

with Corinthian capitals. It emerges from a ſmall thicket which backs it and determines its ſite, and without impoſing the idea of ſolitude renders it ſufficiently ſequeſtered. Before we reach this temple, the Triumphal Arch and Woodſtock Tower are ſeen in pleaſing perſpective. From hence, the ſcene gradually changes. Inſtead of embelliſhed lawn, we become emboſomed in trees of venerable majeſty. The park and gardens ſeem to unite, or their diſtinction is loſt. The trimneſs of the walk, and the occaſional ſight of evergreens, alone diſcriminate the latter.

The parts unite,
And ſtrength of ſhade contends with ſtrength of light.

Open grove at an agreeable diſtance on each ſide continues for a conſiderable ſpace. The whole is a delightful Home-walk, ſheltered by the winding of its direction from

every blaſt; poſſeſſing ſufficient variety in every part, with an aſpect continually improving.

From this pleaſing route, however, we are drawn aſide to the contemplation of the FLOWER GARDEN. A diverticle from the principal walk, near an ornamental tripod, inclines to a thick grove on the right, in which this elyſian ſpot is placed. In our progreſs, the trees form an embowering ſhade,—as we enter,—they range in amphitheatric pride, and preſent a reclining face of foliage from the ground to a vaſt height above. The ſudden burſt of ſo much beauty ſtrikes the eye; the muſick of the ſpray delights the ear;—the fragrance recreates the other ſenſes: images of tranquil joy fix their faireſt impreſſions on the mind; and if they cannot efface the remembrance

of

of ills, they ſoothe it into reſignation.

This wilderneſs of ſweets, which occupies about an acre, is copied from the deſign of Madame Pompadour, as diſplayed in the gardens of VERSAILLES. The outline is elegant; the execution charming; the accompaniments are judicious.

A waving glow the bloomy beds diſplay,
Bluſhing in bright diverſities of day.

In the centre of variouſly arranged bouquets, which the boſom of the earth ſupports, is an Obeliſk of porphyry, ſurrounded with four white marble vaſes, filled with annual flowers; on the north is a neat Temple, properly dedicated to FLORA; and during the ſummer months, every interſtice left by the trunks of the ſurrounding grove is repleniſhed with oranges, lemons, and other exotic trees,

trees, ſhrubs, and plants of the greateſt delicacy and the richeſt odour, which ranking in natural progreſſion before the permanent vegetative tribes ſeem alſo the denizens of the ſpot.

There are different outlets through the grove; but to proceed in the regular tour, we take that near the ſouth-eaſt angle; and after being emboſomed in trees for a few paces, the ſcene opens to the left, but ſoon ſhuts with aggravated gloom. The trees become ſo thick and umbrageous that the meridian ſun only plays on their tops, or permeates an accidental break. The ſweet ſmelling lime, the dark cheſnut, and the airy beech, with evergreens below, bear the chief proportion here. All is ſtill—all is ſolemn. The contraſt with the flower garden is very ſtriking, with the view

that ſoon opens extremely captivating.

The Palladian gate, or entrance into the KITCHEN GARDENS, appears on the eaſt; and the eye darts over a cheerful landſcape to the ſouth. On this ſide the walls of the kitchen gardens, which are fourteen feet high, are concealed by irregular plantations of laurels and other ſhrubs, thinly ſcattered with foreſt trees. From the gate we trace their vaſt extent, clothed with the choiceſt fruit trees; and we behold an area of eight acres, while four more remain unſeen, furniſhed with every article of culinary uſe, or of elegance in the deſſert, and replete with every requiſite appendage for bringing it to perfection.

Falling into the Home-walk at this place, the deviation from which has been previouſly mentioned, we ſoon enter

enter the SHEEP-WALK, which is half a mile in length, and through its whole extent abounding with rural imagery. Frequently covered with a flock of more than a thouſand ſheep, all of the moſt beautiful and valuable, and ſome of the moſt curious kinds, this ſpace, though poſſeſſing features of characteriſtic negligence, is not leſs rich or leſs animated than the moſt favourite ſpots in the garden.

The open grove winds away to the right, and on this hand we catch a glimpſe of the ſouth front of the Palace, which is thrown into various perſpective as we advance. In other directions we enjoy a pictureſque view of Beckley Hill, juſt peeping over the intervening heights; of Witham's lofty woods riſing to the ſummit of Botley, where the trees

range

range in ſolitary ſtate; and through the long perſpective of a rich champaign, in which ENSHAM Tower forms a very conſpicuous object when illumined with a morning ſun, the diſtant WHITE HORSE Hills are ſeen to elevate themſelves into a back-ground. Nor are remote pictures alone attractive at this hour: the deep ſhade that darkens the neighbouring village of BLADON is finely contraſted with the level beams that glance on the water below.

Proceeding, in one place the NEW-BRIDGE appears broke and ruinous by the fall of a tree that overhangs the bank; in another it ſhews its arches entire, and even the lower viſible reach of water is ſeen ſparkling through its baluſtrades: farther, the centre arch alone is perceptible; and ſometimes the whole is loſt. Such

is

is the effect of grouping and combining! The lawn is ſprinkled with beautiful groups of trees: the majeſtic oak with pendent inclination to the ſtream is the frequent ornament of the ſlope.

About the middle of this walk, the top of HANDBOROUGH Spire, though more than three miles off, appears emerging from the boſom of the deep wood beyond the lake; and cloſe on the right is ſeen the SHEPHERD'S COT, a little thatched edifice, compoſed of the trunks of trees fancifully arranged, backed by a clump, and ſhaded by horſe-cheſnuts in front.

Near this ſpot we may pauſe to contemplate the beauties which the changing ſcene diſplays. Nothing can be more pictureſque than BLADON when gilded with an evening ſun:

ſun: the antique low tower, and here and there the end of a building, glow with the crimſon of his beams, or the window, partially ſhaded by intervening trees, reflects them like living fire. CLAUDE would have caught the tints with rapture; he would have combined the objects into a picture; and on its effect he might have reſted the immortality of his fame.

A little beyond the Shepherd's Cot is the firſt opening of the CASCADE; and for ſome ſpace it forms a principal attraction. The water ſeems to flow out of the deep wood that bounds the head; its courſe is totally hid by the bend, by the figure of the banks, and the effect of plantation. Every ſtep we deſcend towards the caſcade the embelliſhments thicken, the ſcene becomes more illuſtrious.

illuſtrious. Groups of acacia, cedar, poplar, cheſnut, and beech, decorate the declivity down to the river; and beyond it at a proportionate diſtance, the back-ground as far as the commencement of the new garden, is adorned with a profuſion of hawthorns, ſurmounted by noble pendent trees, which ſtretching round as far as the eye can reach, terminate in the near horizon.

But before we ſink into the vale, it will not be unpleaſing to take a retroſpective view of the landſcape we are leaving behind. The lofty ſpire of KIDLINGTON ſeems to belong to the park; the diſtant hills, formerly obſerved, are caſt into different perſpective; and a new and wider range is diſplayed, farther than natural viſion can diſtinguiſh objects, and till the blue hills of BUCKS cloſe

with the bounding ſky. Among theſe ASHRIDGE, the ſeat of the Duke of Bridgwater, may be aſcertained in a clear day.

The obeliſk of the fountain ſoon peeps between a little woody iſland and the caſcade; and the grand RIVER, which a few paces before was inviſible, burſts at once on the eye in a broad ſheet, without apparent continuity or connection. Before we reach the termination of the ſheep-walk we loſe the caſcade on the left; to it however we at laſt deſcend between clumps and groups of the moſt luxuriant and delicate trees of various climes, intermixed with flowers and ſhrubs of the utmoſt fragrance and beauty. The ground, which at firſt is higheſt on the left, ſoon aſſumes a determined ſuperiority on the right. It is thrown into maſſes with a

maſterly hand; it has received every embelliſhment that refined taſte can confer on natural beauty; and we enjoy the touch of art without waking the idea that revolts at its diſplay.

Here various trees compoſe a chequer'd ſcene,
Glowing in gay diverſities of green;
There the full ſtream thro' intermingling glades,
Shines a broad lake, or falls in loud caſcades.

In the vicinity of the caſcade, whoſe ſides are finely ſhaded, the water is quite loſt above. Even from the bridge that fronts it at fifty feet diſtance, we only ſee the fall without tracing the ſupply. The charming reach below appears in its moſt varied features from this bridge, which connects the gardens; and when the full ſtream devolves from the rocky barrier, and bounds from one point to another in foamy pride with deafen-

ing roar, nothing can be more grateful to a contemplative mind than ſuch a ſcene and ſuch a ſituation.

The NEW GARDEN, which we now enter, though of no very great extent, contains many beauties peculiar to itſelf, many views of magnificent and appropriate ſcenery. Following the courſe of the river on the left, we ſoon reach NEWFOUND WELL, a mineral ſpring of the chalybeate kind, ſaid to poſſeſs very active virtues. In the front of a dark clump riſes a pedeſtal ſupporting an urn, and from an aperture in the former guſhes the ſpring; and being received into an antique baſon, charged with numerous fancy figures, in alto relievo, much injured, flows out near the top by the mouths of two lions, and quickly mixes with the river. Again we have a view of

the new bridge, and of a ſerpentine reach of water, embracing the iſland, and gliding on with glaſſy ſmoothneſs. The FOUNTAIN next attracts our notice. It is ſituated at the bottom of the hill, and forms an object not unworthy of its place and deſtination. In the centre of an elegant capacious baſon, where dolphins ſeem to ſport, ſtands the baſe, formed of a ſpecies of porous ſtone, permeable by the water, and thrown together in rude pomp, with an arch from eaſt to weſt, in which are marble figures of a lion and ſea-horſe couchant; probably ſome of the original adjuncts of the River Gods that recline on the ſides above. Theſe are four in number. They are ſculptured in white marble with a delicacy and expreſſion ſcarcely to be ſurpaſſed; and are uſually ſuppoſed

to

to repreſent the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and the Tiber. This appropriation is evidently wrong in ſome; but as they have few characteriſtic appendages, it is not eaſy to offer a certain diſcrimination, nor perhaps was it ever intended.

If the alluſion is to the antique, the veiled figure may poſſibly be the Danube*, or the Nile; that with the

* On an ancient medal of Trajan, the Danube is depicted having its head covered with a veil.

Danubius penitis caput occultatus in oris
Fluo——— AUSON.

The River Tiber is repreſented in the Vatican at Rome, reſting his right leg on an oar. The hair and features ſufficiently mark the Niger. The other has no particular characteriſtic here, but in a print of the original Fountain at Rome, the palm tree is placed near; and we are told the Indus ſhould be drawn with a pleaſing countenance, which ſo far correſponds with the application.

right leg reſting on an oar, the Tiber; the figure with the negro features, the Niger; the other the Indus. On the ſquare pedeſtal of an obeliſk of white marble is the ſubſequent inſcription in four different languages, Latin, Greek, Italian, and Spaniſh.

Ad Innocentium XI. Summum Pontificem.
Pro. Carolo. II. Hiſpaniarum Rege
Excelc: D. D. Gaſpar: De. Haro, et Guzman.
Murchio. De. Carpio. Et Helicheo Orator.
Ad Typum Molis. In Agonali Foro Erectæ.
Ab Equite. Bernino. Opus. Hoc. Extrui.
Juſſit, Eodem. dirigente. Qui. Interim.
Dum perficeretur. Defunctus.
Hoc: Poſthumo. Partu: Inexhauſtam.
Mentis. Fœcunditatem Clauſit.
Anno D: M: DC: LXXXI.

This fine piece of ſculpture, the laſt work of Bernini, and a copy from the magnificent fountain in the Piazza

Piazza Navona at Rome, was a preſent from the Spaniſh ambaſſador at the Papal court to the firſt Duke of Marlborough. It has only been recently erected; and during the many years it lay neglected, it was much damaged, and part of it loſt. Still however it bears a cloſe reſemblance to the noble original; proves an ornament to the gardens, and the admiration of ſpectators.

From the fountain the path meanders up hill. The left is open to the charming vale through which the river glides; the right is occaſionally ſhaded by groups of trees. Almoſt every ſtep preſents a new ſcene; the tranſitions are ſudden but never harſh: even the ſtrong contraſt between the elegant ſculpture we have juſt left, and the wild rock ſeats that occupy the brow, gives an additional

impreſſion to each. Above theſe is a noble view into the park: the HIGH LODGE, with its antique battlements amidſt an amphitheatre of venerable trees, is a ſtriking object in the landſcape. From this ſpot we wind to the right, and freſh beauties again arreſt the attention. To paint every change of ſcenery that preſents itſelf in the ſpace of an hundred yards would be impoſſible: the impreſſion can only be conveyed by the eye;—the happieſt deſcription would fail. At one point, we have a glimpſe of the river; at another perhaps it is loſt; the turrets of the Palace juſt emerge; an expanſe of water with a foreſt line of wood draws the view; and, at a few paces diſtance, the Palace, the river, the two principal bridges, and the fine terrace on the weſt of the gardens, all burſt with irreſiſtible

irreſiſtible beauty and attraction. At this ſpot the ſublime predominates in a very high degree; and frigid indeed muſt that taſte be, which will not feel and confeſs the energy of the ſcene. When the riſing ſun throws its horizontal rays on the gilded orbs of Blenheim, the tops of the trees catch his radiance, and the withdrawing ſhade lightly floats on the ſurface of the lake; nature does not furniſh a picture of more brilliance than this. A little farther, and the intervening groups allow only glimpſes;—again the proſpect opens, the park diſplays its ſylvan honours on the north, and on the eaſt the Chiltern hills bound the ſight. At the utmoſt extent of viſion is WINCHENDON, formerly the ſeat of the Duke of Wharton, now the property of his Grace of Marlborough. There is ſomething

thing grand in the idea: the vaſt ſpace between is ſwallowed up; and fancy combining the diſtant domains in the ſame landſcape, gives a ſanction and a ſolution to the magnificence around.

On the right, as we turn down towards the iron-bridge, ſtands l'ARROTINO, or, as it is uſually called, the LISTENING SLAVE, a fine caſt in bronze from the antique, by Benzi. Deſcending to the river, from diſtant views the tranſition becomes inſtantaneous to near ones. The water is ſeen flowing round to the caſcade: the bank on the right is abrupt and rocky, chiefly planted with ſumach; on the left, it is adorned with the faireſt riſing plantations, which in a ſhort time will render the ſpot more characteriſtically romantic.

On

On the Blenheim ſide of the iron-bridge the caſcade and its accompaniments are wholly loſt; the former can only be traced by its murmurs and its daſhing. The walk now runs along the left of the upper river: the lower is ſcarcely perceptible. Even the inferior path, by which we deſcend from the ſheep-walk to the caſcade, though only a few yards below, is rendered entirely diſtinct, by the figure of the ground, and the groups that adorn it. As we advance to the angle of the ſheep-walk, the ground becomes gradually more elevated. Beyond the broad expanſe of water on the left, a fine outline of pendent wood ſtretches along to an indeterminate length; on the other hand is highly decorated lawn. The TERRACE may be ſaid to commence at this point; and its captivating

vating charms are gradually developed as we proceed. From a moderate elevation above the level of the lake, it riſes to a bold declivity, feathered down to the brink with majeſtic trees, interſperſed with plantations of younger growth, grouped and arranged in the moſt enchanting ſtyle, while the wild foreſt that clothes the oppoſite bank is reflected in the cryſtal tide below. The lake is farther enlivened with various pleaſure veſſels, diſpoſed in ſuch a manner as may beſt adorn this illuſtrious ſcene. Behind is a delightful perſpective of the back-ground on the ſouth-weſt; and the caſcade glitters in all its grandeur.

As we approximate the level of the terrace, the ſhaft of Churchill's PILLAR appears in front above the ſurrounding trees; by degrees it opens

opens to its very baſe. The dark groves in the northern part of the park begin to diſplay themſelves; and couched in the front of one, the celebrated BATH of Roſamond may be dimly diſcerned. The water too aſſumes a variety of figures; the outline becomes more indented; and a collateral branch of undefined extent, running up a deep vale from the principal ſtream, without appearing to derive its ſole importance from it, has the pleaſing effect of ſeeming to augment its current. DITCHLEY Woods form the horizon; theſe fall into the back-ground of the ſcene, at a diſtance ſufficient for greatneſs and without any disjunction of parts.

Here we reach the Temple of DIANA, which ſtands on the ſummit of the declivity.—We ſurvey the landſcape with rapture—we confeſs the *ne plus ultra*

ultra of pictureſque embelliſhment. This temple indeed marks the happy ſpot where the aſſemblage of different attractions operate with ſingular advantage. All is great—all is executed on a ſcale of proportionate magnificence; and though every part of the gardens has peculiar charms, this terrace—this point in particular, as a home view combines more than all, and exhibits almoſt every different excellence of each.

The temple itſelf is a beautiful ſtructure, deſigned by Sir William Chambers; and its ſituation correſponds with that on the eaſt of the gardens. In the front are four pillars with Ionic capitals; and on the pediment is this dedication:

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΙ.
ΑΓΡΙΑΙ-ΙΑΔΙ.
ΟΡΕΣΤΙΑΔΙ.

" *To the Ionian, rural, mountain-ranging Diana.*"

On the back within, is a central medallion, repreſenting in baſs-relief, HIPPOLYTUS offering a wreath of flowers to DIANA; and on two others united to this by a feſtoon, are the ſubſequent verſes from the Hippolytus of EURIPIDES, with the annexed elegant Engliſh verſion.

Σοι τονδε πλεκτον στεφανον εξ ακηρατου
Λειμωνος, Ω Δεσποινα, κοσμησας φερω.
Ενθ' ουδε ποιμην αξιοι φερβειν βοτα,
Ουδ' ηλθε πω σιδηρος· αλλ' ακηρατον
Μελισσα λειμων' εαρινος διερχεται·
Ηως δε ποταμιαισι κηπευει δροσοις.

To thee, bright Goddeſs, theſe fair flowers I bring,
A chaplet woven from th' untainted mead,
Thy cool ſequeſter'd haunt, where never yet
Shepherd approach'd; where the rude hind ne'er heav'd

Th'

Th' unhallow'd axe: nor voice nor ſound is heard,
Save the low murmuring of the vernal bee.
The day-ſpring from above the dew diſtils
Genial and mild, from the pure ſtream exhal'd,
On every fragrant herb, and favourite flower.

Hurried on by the ſplendour of more capital objects, we forget to notice another caſt in bronze of the ROMAN WRESTLERS, by Benzi. It ſtands on the right a little before we approach the temple, and well deſerves attention as a juſt repreſentation of the antique.

A ſhort way beyond the temple we enjoy many brilliant ſcenes in the park; and turning round over the charming lawn before the ſouth front of the Palace, finiſh the tour of the gardens with impreſſions of pleaſure gradually raiſed to the higheſt, and permanently fixed by the

the ſplendor of the concluding ſcenery.

The interſecting walks generally retire from the ſight, but are never wanting for neceſſary communication: they conduct to the principal ſubordinate ſcenes; they occupy the happieſt ſpaces. By following their direction we are ſure of meeting with ſome object in our progreſs to compenſate for the toil; ſome beauty is developed which would otherwiſe be loſt; or ſcenes are thrown into perſpective, or heightened by contraſt, in a manner different from what we obſerved before.

The occaſional recurrence alſo of the garden chair, the plain bench, or the circular ſeat round the trunk of ſome umbrageous tree, by preſenting opportunities for reſt, prevent the idea of laſſitude. Thus, in our

journey through life, it is not always the actual uſe of the accommodations we poſſeſs that adds to our comfort; it is the reflection that we may command them in the hour of need, and that we have it in our power to gratify the want as ſoon as it is felt. But theſe are not ſimply objects of ornament or convenience: they generally point out ſcenes which repoſe may contemplate with delight, and fancy combine into picture.

Here a thouſand beauties, originating from deſign, appear fortuitous to the eye. Though traverſing a garden where taſte has exhauſted its ſkill, we inceſſantly indulge the idea of being only contemplating the natural charms of the country, and tracing delights of rich variety and unlimited extent.

In

In this tour, indeed, we have omitted many circumſtances which in an inferior place would have claimed deſerved regard. Here littleneſs is abſorbed in grandeur, and prettineſs in magnificence. This marks the prevailing character; and ſhould it ever, in the minuteſt inſtance, be ſacrificed to its oppoſite, Blenheim will loſe that principal beauty—conſiſtency, though it may borrow the faireſt flowers from the garland of novelty. Of this there is no danger; while the ſame taſte that has ſo ably planned, ſo nobly preſides, *et longum ſit*, this place will not only maintain its acknowledged ſuperiority, but riſe ſtill higher in the ſcale of public eſtimation.

RIVER*.

THE river, which covers the whole extent of a ſpacious valley, bending in the happieſt ſtile, and affording the moſt profuſe variety of pictureſque features in the ſublime, the beautiful, and the tranquil, when viewed with its accompaniments, is indiſputably the moſt ſuperb piece of artificial water in this kingdom. It is chiefly ſupplied by the GLYME, which ſtill, in a great meaſure, re-

* If the words river and lake are ſometimes applied to the ſame thing, it is hoped the reader will not impute this to ignorance or error: the water at Blenheim partakes of the nature of both; it is a RIVER, becauſe it has a progreſſive motion; it is alſo a LAKE, becauſe it ſpreads far beyond its original channel. Thus uniting the diſtinguiſhing beauties and characteriſtics of each, it riſes to the pre-eminence of ſublimity in kind.

tains

tains its original direction, its channel being expanded rather than altered; ſo favourable has Nature been to the operations of art!

It enters the park in the vale which ſeparates Old from New Woodſtock, flowing under a belt of riſing plantations, and iſſuing to light by a bridge of ſeven arches, the minuteneſs and multiplicity of which have been thought to derogate from grandeur, though the whole is well adapted to give the idea of continuity. In other views, a thick grove, and beautiful groups of Lombardy poplars, and other trees that love the ſtreams, by concealing the ſource promote the ſame deſirable effect. The banks at firſt are low: on one ſide they ſoon become bold and winding; on the other, they have little elevation, but are happily varied.

The river quickly ſpreading to a great expanſe ſtretches towards QUEEN POOL*, where it forms a ſmall creek, chiefly loſt in trees; then taking a determined courſe, it ſeems to ſeek the oppoſite ſhore, in its progreſs flowing round Queen ELIZABETH'S ISLAND †, a moſt delightful ſpot, clothed with trees and ſhrubs of the utmoſt beauty and variety, which connect the groups on the banks; and ſoon becoming embayed on the left, it winds round to the grand bridge, narrowing as it advances to an adequate breadth.

From the bridge a moſt capital expanſe of water again catches the eye; an expanſe unrivalled by the fineſt

* So called from Philippa queen of Edward III.

† This is part of the ancient cauſeway leading to the royal palace.

Engliſh river*, unmixed with the ſea; and which waſhing the remote banks, varies with their direction; makes a long diverſion up a vale that forms a right angle with its bed, and affords the repreſentation of a collateral ſtream; then rolling a ſeemingly enlarged volume, it winds round, and waſhes the foot of the declivity, on which part of the gardens lie; and on the other ſide it is bounded by a hill, feathered down with a noble wood to the water's edge, and frequently reflected on its ſurface.

Preſerving one general unvarying

* Brown, who ſuperintended ſome of the early improvements here, in his uſual conſequential manner, has been heard to boaſt, "That the Thames would never forgive him for what he had done at Blenheim." Had he lived to the preſent time, he would have been ſenſible how much his moſt finiſhed labours may be ſurpaſſed.

direction for a conſiderable length, it gradually narrows; and viewed from the grand bridge appears land-locked and embayed. Several pleaſure veſſels of various conſtruction riding at anchor, ſwans ſailing in conſcious pride, and other aquatic fowl indigenous as well as exotic, exerciſing their native propenſities, unite to enliven the watery ſcene. When tranquil, the reflected and reverted images in the ſtream preſent a picture, which fancy contemplates with mild delight; when agitated with winds, its rippling boſom and wavy daſh are lively emblems of the ſea, to which it then bears ſome reſemblance.

At the point where it appears embayed, it paſſes under a light iron bridge, ſimple and unadorned, and characteriſtic of its deſtination; and making

making a pretty ſudden bend, it tumbles down a barrier of maſſy rocks, with a force equal to its copiouſneſs, and with a fall of eighteen feet. Above this caſcade are an hundred and fifty acres of water: below it is a continuation of an hundred more.

Recovering its level, it flows with a ſerpentine ſweep through an expanded vale, embelliſhed with a few groups of the moſt flouriſhing young plantation; and at an agreeable diſtance ſtretches another face of the hill already mentioned as a boundary, covered with trees whoſe pendency and age render them at once picturesque and venerable; but though in this reach the river admits an oval woody iſlet, its channel becomes now more contracted than before; and its ſtile partakes rather of the beautiful than

than the ſublime. Reaching the new bridge, a very elegant ſtructure, it inclines with the courſe of the vale, and touching near Bladon, makes a determined bend to the right. The banks on both ſides at this point are ſwelling lawn with little clumps connected by ſingle trees, diſpoſed without the leaſt ſhew of intention.

From hence the river takes a variety of charming turns, chiefly with a ſtrong inclination to the right, doubling as it were on itſelf, and circumſcribing the end of the hill which accompanies it the greateſt part of its courſe. In one place, a fine ſheet of water ſpreads before the eye, and invites progreſs by its apparent continuity; in another, the trees ſeem to embay it, and we advance a conſiderable way before we can detect the deception.

From

From the firſt determined ſweep near Bladon, a gravel walk on the left follows the direction of the river. This walk is bounded on one ſide by a belt of thick plantation; on the other, a few ſcattered trees range with the ſtream. Beyond the river we are charmed with all the diverſity of pleaſing ſcenery: a ſmall grove firſt preſents itſelf cloſe to the verge of the tide; a few irregular trees next ſucceed; ſometimes a clump planted at the termination of a reach, by advancing to the belt on the oppoſite ſhore, appears to landlock the ſtream; then again we are delighted with open lawn and diverſified landſcape. At laſt, the river precipitates itſelf down a ſteep caſcade, and at the ſame inſtant falls into the EVENLODE, which gliding in an oppoſite direction through verdant meads, winds under the park to receive the tributary

tributary GLYME. The united rivers forming a woody iſland immediately after their junction, meander through a continuation of meads, and diſpenſe beauty and fertility as they flow.

The effect occaſioned by two rivers haſtening to meet each other, and then bending almoſt at right angles with their former courſe, is as pleaſing as it is ſingular and romantic. No aukward termination is here to be traced; no diſguſting diſplay of art to heighten the ſcene: taſte unfolds the beauties of Nature with a delicate touch, and Art is only the handmaid to her charms.

So many circumſtances lend their aid to embelliſh this ſpot and its vicinity, that we ſcruple not to pronounce it one of the moſt delightful in the precincts of Blenheim: but it retires from the view, and its unobtruſive

charms

charms are therefore ſeldom ſeen. While ſcenes leſs captivating force attention by a bold diſplay, theſe, like modeſty, ſhun the public eye, and are only viſited by the diſcerning few. May we not add, ſuch is the fate of unaſſuming merit; its lovely qualities are only caſually noticed, and the impreſſion they make is often too evaneſcent to avail them!

To return—the water at Blenheim, as a very elegant writer* obſerves, "in ſize, form, and ſtile, is equal "to the majeſty of the ſcene; and is "deſigned in the ſpirit, is executed "with the liberality of the original "donation, when this reſidence of a "mighty monarch was beſtowed by "a great people, as a munificent re-"ward on the hero who had deſerved "beſt of his country."

* Wheatley on Modern Gardening.

PARK.

PARK.

THE PARK, which under the auſpices of the preſent Duke has received every poſſible improvement,

Plann'd by his taſte, and planted by his hand,

is one continued galaxy of charming proſpects, and agreeably diverſified ſcenes. Its circumference is upwards of twelve miles; its area about two thouſand ſeven hundred acres, round which are the moſt enchanting rides, chiefly ſhaded towards the boundary with a deep belt of various trees, evergreens, and deciduous ſhrubs, whoſe mingled foliage exhibit the different gradations of tints from the moſt faint to the moſt obfuſcated green; while others of correſponding figure and growth on the park ſide, ſome-

ſometimes range with the former, and ſometimes breaking into groups, with large interſtices between, relieve the tædium of continued uniformity, and open the moſt brilliant proſpects. Indeed the effects of poliſhed taſte and the ſublime in deſign are no where more perceptible than in the boundleſs views which at intervals preſent themſelves; the limits of the park being in general quite concealed; and the whole ſurrounding country, varied with hills, and vales, ſpires, towers, and villas, appearing as one wide extended landſcape. In the internal part new improvements are continually adopting, and new plantations riſing, wherever they can contribute to the beauty or the luxuriance of the ſcene.

—Hence the poor are cloth'd, the hungry fed,
Health to himſelf, and to his children bread
The labourer bears.——

The

The uſual ride round the park for occaſional viſitors includes a circumference of rather more than three miles, deſcribing a wide circle round the palace and gardens, which are caſually and advantageouſly ſeen through glades in the progreſs, and exhibiting many magnificent pictures over the park and country round.

To enumerate every beauty conſpicuous in this tour would be to delineate all that is charming in natural objects; and in ſome inſtances would occaſion a repetition of circumſtances already remarked. A detail muſt not therefore be expected. Let it however be obſerved, that at Blenheim the *ferme ornée* is combined with the magnificent park. In one quarter, the eye is delighted with the ſight of waving corn, in another with green paddocks that invite the ſcythe: here a build-

a building dedicated to agricultural purpoſes, or raiſed for the accommodation of the neceſſary officers, juſt peeps through the deep ſhade of ſurrounding trees; there the team rattles down the ſlope abrupt. On one ſide appears a herd of deer, on another a flock of ſheep, and ſometimes animals native and foreign graze in ſocial peace. All is a picture of rural life in its moſt agreeable colours, in its happieſt avocations: it preſents cheerful activity, or tranquil repoſe—Arcadian ſcenes diveſted of fable, and real wealth without glitter.

Among the many captivating views which every ſpectator of taſte will recognize in his ride, thoſe from the HIGH LODGE and the OBELISK may be particularized. The HIGH LODGE was once the reſidence of the witty, but immoral Wilmot Earl of Rocheſ-

ter, and the place where he died. Let thoſe, who have copied his profligacy, reflect on his remorſe, and reſolve to imitate his repentance! From hence the proſpect is not only one of the moſt extenſive, but alſo one of the moſt captivating in Great Britain: it includes, among a variety of other capital and pictureſque objects, a beautiful view of the Univerſity of OXFORD.

From the OBELISK, the Palace, the River, and the Gardens are ſeen in their beſt perſpective, and the idea of grandeur they excite will convert admiration into aſtoniſhment. Nor will the obeliſk itſelf paſs without obſervation: it is raiſed to the memory of the hero of modern times, before whoſe tranſcendent ſervices the little merits of other warriors are loſt. The ſtatue of this great man,

man, which crowns the column, is deſigned in a Roman dreſs: at his feet are two eagles; in the left hand is the general's baton; in the right, a figure of VICTORY elevated. On three ſides of the pedeſtal are inſcribed the Acts of the Britiſh Parliament in his favour, and the entail of his honours and eſtates on the deſcendants of his daughters, by which they centre in the preſent illuſtrious family: on the ſide facing Blenheim, his character is thus delineated, and his exploits recorded, as is ſuppoſed, by the maſterly pen of Lord Bolingbroke:

The Caſtle of BLENHEIM was founded by Queen ANNE,
In the fourth Year of her Reign,
In the Year of the Chriſtian Æra
One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Five.

A Monument deſigned to perpetuate the Memory of the
Signal Victory
Obtained over the *French* and *Bavarians*,
Near the Village of BLENHEIM,
On the Banks of the *Danube*,
By JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH,
The Hero not only of his Nation, but of his Age;
Whoſe Glory was equal in the Council and in the Field;
Who by Wiſdom, Juſtice, Candour, and Addreſs,
Reconciled various, and even oppoſite Intereſts;
acquired an Influence
Which no Rank, no Authority, can give,
Nor any Force, but that of ſuperior Virtue:
Became the fixed, important Centre,
Which united, in one common Cauſe,
The principal States of EUROPE;
Who, by military Knowledge, and irreſiſtible Valour,
In a long Series of uninterrupted Triumphs,
Broke the Power of FRANCE,
When raiſed the higheſt, when exerted the moſt:
Reſcued the EMPIRE from Deſolation;
Aſſerted, and confirmed the Liberties of EUROPE.

" PHILIP,

" PHILIP, a Grandſon of the Houſe
" of FRANCE, united to the Intereſt,
" directed by the Policy, ſupported by
" the Arms of that Crown, was placed on
" the Throne of Spain. King WIL-
" LIAM III. beheld this formidable
" Union of two Great, and once Rival
" Monarchies. At the End of a Life
" ſpent in defending the Liberties of
" EUROPE, He ſaw them in their
" greateſt Danger. He provided for
" their Security in the moſt effectual
" Manner. He took the Duke of Marl-
" borough into his Service.

" Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
" To the States General of the United Provinces,

" The Duke contracted ſeveral Al-
" liances, before the Death of King Wil-
" liam. He confirmed and improved
" Theſe, He contracted others, after the
" Acceſſion of Queen ANNE; and re-
" united the Confederacy, which had
" been diſſolved at the End of a for-

" mer War, in a ſtricter and firmer
" League.

" Captain General and Commander in Chief
" Of the Forces of Great Britain,

" The Duke led to the Field the Army
" of the Allies. He took with ſurpriſing
" Rapidity VENLO, RUREMONDE,
" STEVENSWAERT, LIEGE. He
" extended and ſecured the Frontiers of
" the Dutch The Enemies, whom he
" found inſulting at the Gates of NI-
" MEGHEN, were driven to ſeek for
" Shelter behind their Lines. He forced
" BONNE, HUY, LIMBOURG, in
" another Campaign. He opened the
" Communication of the RHINE, as
" well as the MAES. He added all the
" Country between theſe Rivers to his
" former Conqueſts.

" The Arms of FRANCE, favoured
" by the Defection of the Elector of BA-
" VARIA, had penetrated into the Heart
" of the EMPIRE. This mighty Body
" lay

" lay expoſed to immediate Ruin. In
" that memorable Criſis, the Duke of
" MARLBOROUGH led his Troops
" with unexampled Celerity, Secrecy,
" Order, from the OCEAN to the DA-
" NUBE. He ſaw, He attacked, nor
" ſtopped, but to conquer the Enemy.
" He forced the BAVARIANS, ſuſtain-
" ed by the FRENCH, in their ſtrong
" Entrenchments at SCHELLEN-
" BERG. He paſſed the DANUBE.
" A ſecond Royal Army, compoſed of
" the beſt Troops of FRANCE, was ſent
" to reinforce the firſt. That of the Con-
" federates was divided. With one Part
" of it the Siege of INGOLDSTADT
" was carried on: with the other, the
" Duke gave Battle to the united
" Strength of FRANCE & BAVARIA.
" On the ſecond Day of Auguſt, one
" thouſand ſeven hundred and four,
" He gained a more glorious Victory
" than the Hiſtories of any Age can
" boaſt. The Heaps of ſlain were dread-

" ful Proofs of his Valour: A Marſhall
" of FRANCE, whole Legions of
" FRENCH, his Priſoners, proclaimed
" his Mercy. BAVARIA was ſubdued.
" RATISBON, AUSBOURG, ULM,
" MEMINGHEN, all the Uſurpations
" of the Enemy were reſtored. From
" the DANUBE the Duke turned his
" victorious Arms towards the RHINE
" and the MOSELLE. LANDAU,
" TREVES, TRAERBACH were
" taken. In the Courſe of one Cam-
" paign the very Nature of the War
" was changed. The Invaders of other
" States were reduced to defend their
" own. The Frontier of FRANCE
" was expoſed in its weakeſt Part to the
" Efforts of the Allies.

" That He might improve this Ad-
" vantage, that He might puſh the Sum
" of Things to a ſpeedy Deciſion, the
" Duke of MARLBOROUGH led his
" Troops early in the following Year

" once

" once more to the MOSELLE. They
" whom He had ſaved a few Months
" before, neglected to ſecond him now.
" They who might have been His Com-
" panions in Conqueſt, refuſed to join
" him. When He ſaw the generous
" Deſigns He had formed fruſtrated by
" private Intereſt, by Pique, by Jealouſy,
" He returned with Speed to the MAES.
" He returned, and Fortune and Victory
" returned with Him. LIEGE was
" relieved: HUY re-taken. The
" FRENCH, who had preſſed the Ar-
" my of the STATES GENERAL
" with ſuperior Numbers, retired be-
" hind Intrenchments which they deemed
" impregnable. The Duke forced theſe
" Intrenchments, with inconſiderable
" Loſs, on the ſeventh Day of July,
" 1705. He defeated a great Part of
" the Army which defended them. The
" reſt eſcaped by a precipitate Retreat.
" If Advantages proportionable to
" this Succeſs were not immediately
" obtained,

" obtained, let the Failure be aſcribed to
" that Misfortune which attends moſt
" Confederacies, a Diviſion of Opinions
" where one alone ſhould judge, a Di-
" viſion of Powers where one alone
" ſhould command. The Diſappoint-
" ment itſelf did Honour to the Duke.
" It became the Wonder of Mankind,
" how he could do ſo much under thoſe
" Reſtraints which had hindered him
" from doing more.

" Powers more abſolute were given
" him afterwards. The Encreaſe of his
" Powers multiplied his Victories. At
" the opening of the next Campaign,
" when all his Army was not yet aſſem-
" bled, when it was hardly known that
" he had taken the Field, the Noiſe of
" his Triumphs was heard over EU-
" ROPE. On the twelfth Day of May,
" one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix,
" he attacked the French at RAMEL-
" LIES. In the Space of two Hours

" their whole Army was put to Flight.
" The Vigour and Conduct with which
" he improved the Succeſs were equal to
" thoſe with which he gained it. LOU-
" VAIN, BRUSSELS, MALINES,
" LIERE, GHENT, OUDENARDE,
" ANTWERP, DAMME, BRU-
" GES, COURTRAY ſurrendered.
" OSTEND, MENIN, DENDER-
" MOND, AETH, were taken.
" BRABANT and FLANDERS were
" recovered. Places which had reſiſted
" the greateſt Generals for Months, for
" Years; Provinces diſputed for Ages,
" were the Conqueſts of a Summer.

" Nor was the Duke content to tri-
" umph alone. Solicitous for the ge-
" neral Intereſt, his Care extended to
" the remoteſt Scenes of the War. He
" choſe to leſſen his own Army, that he
" might enable the Leaders of other
" Armies to conquer. To this muſt be
" aſcribed, that TURIN was relieved

" the

" the Duke of SAVOY reinſtated, the " FRENCH driven with Confuſion out " of ITALY.

" Theſe Victories gave the Confe- " derates an Opportunity of carrying the " War on every Side into the Dominions " of FRANCE. But ſhe continued to " enjoy a Kind of peaceful Neutrality " in GERMANY. From ITALY, " ſhe was once alarmed, and had no " more to fear. The entire Reduction " of this Power, whoſe Ambition had " cauſed, whoſe Strength ſupported the " War, ſeemed reſerved to him alone, " who had ſo triumphantly begun the " glorious Work.

" The Barrier of FRANCE on the " Side of the LOW COUNTRIES, " had been forming for more than half a " Century. What Art, Power, Expence " could do, had been done, to render " it impenetrable. Yet here ſhe was " moſt expoſed: for here the Duke of

" MARL-

" MARLBOROUGH threatened to
" attack her.

" To cover what they had gained by
" Surpriſe, or had been yielded to them
" by Treachery, the FRENCH marched
" to the Banks of the SCHELDE. At
" their Head were the Princes of the
" Blood, and their moſt fortunate Ge-
" neral the Duke of VENDOME.
" Thus commanded, thus poſted, they
" hoped to check the Victor in his
" Courſe. Vain were their Hopes. The
" Duke of MARLBOROUGH paſſed
" the River in their Sight. He defeated
" their whole Army. The Approach of
" Night concealed, the Proximity of
" GHENT favoured their Flight. They
" neglected nothing to repair their Loſs,
" to defend their Frontier. New Ge-
" nerals, new Armies appeared in the
" NETHERLANDS. All contributed
" to enhance the Glory, none were able
" to retard the Progreſs of the Confe-
" derate Armies.

" LISLE,

" LISLE, the Bulwark of this Bar-
" rier, was beſieged. A numerous Gar-
" riſon and a Marſhal of FRANCE
" defended the Place. Prince EU-
" GENE of SAVOY commanded, the
" Duke of MARLBOROUGH covered
" and ſuſtained the Siege. The Rivers
" were ſeized, and the Communication
" with HOLLAND interrupted. The
" Duke opened new Communications
" with great Labour, and greater Art.
" Through Countries over-run by the
" Enemy, the neceſſary Convoys arrived
" in Safety. One alone was attacked.
" The Troops which attacked it were
" beat. The Defence of LISLE was
" animated by Aſſurances of Relief.
" The FRENCH aſſembled all their
" Force. They marched towards the
" Town. The Duke of MARLBO-
" ROUGH offered them Battle, without
" ſuſpending the Siege. They aban-
" doned the Enterpriſe. They came to

" ſave

" ſave the Town: they were Specta-
" tors of its Fall.

" From this Conqueſt the Duke haſten-
" ed to others.

" The Poſts taken by the Enemy on
" the SCHELDE were ſurpriſed. That
" River was paſſed the ſecond Time,
" and notwithſtanding the great Prepa-
" rations made to prevent it, without
" Oppoſition. BRUSSELS, beſieged by
" the Elector of BAVARIA, was re-
" lieved. GHENT ſurrendered to the
" Duke in the Middle of a Winter re-
" markably ſevere. An Army, little
" inferior to his own, marched out of the
" Place.

" As ſoon as the Seaſon of the Year
" permitted him to open another Cam-
" paign, the Duke beſieged and took
" TOURNAY. He inveſted MONS.
" Near this City, the FRENCH Army,
" covered by thick Woods, defended
" by treble Entrenchments, waited to

" moleſt

" moleſt, nor preſumed to offer Battle.
" Even this was not attempted by them
" with Impunity. On the laſt Day of
" Auguſt one thouſand ſeven hundred and
" nine, the Duke attacked them in their
" Camp. All was employed, nothing
" availed againſt the Reſolution of ſuch
" a General, againſt the Fury of ſuch
" Troops. The Battle was bloody: the
" Event deciſive. The Woods were
" pierced: the Fortifications trampled
" down. The Enemy fled. The Town
" was taken.

" DOWAY, BETHUNE, AIRE,
" St. VENANT, BOUCHAIN under-
" went the ſame Fate in two ſucceeding
" Years. Their vigorous Reſiſtance
" could not ſave them. The Army of
" FRANCE durſt not attempt to re-
" lieve them. It ſeemed preſerved to
" defend the Capital of the Monarchy.

" The Proſpect of this extreme Diſ-
" treſs was neither diſtant nor dubious.

" The

" The FRENCH acknowledged their
" Conqueror, and ſued for peace.

Theſe are the Actions of the Duke of MARLBOROUGH,
Performed in the Compaſs of a few Years,
Sufficient to adorn the Annals of Ages.
The Admiration of other Nations
Will be conveyed to lateſt Poſterity,
In the Hiſtories even of the Enemies of BRITAIN.
The Senſe which the BRITISH Nation had
Of his tranſcendent Merit,
was expreſſed
In the moſt ſolemn, moſt effectual, moſt durable Manner.
The Acts of PARLIAMENT inſcribed on this Pillar,
Shall ſtand as long as the BRITISH Name and Language laſt,
Illuſtrious Monuments
Of MARLBOROUGH's Glory,
and
Of BRITAIN's Gratitude.

Rows of ſtately trees deſcribe a creſcent on the eaſt and weſt of this column; but ſoon converging behind to a moderate breadth, and breaking into groups and clumps of different

forms and magnitudes, they form a charming viſta to an almoſt undetermined length. Through this viſta formerly lay the road conducting to the grand approach; a ſtraight reach of more than two miles, without much diverſity in the objects, and with too great formality to pleaſe. It now takes a happier direction along the edge of the lake to QUEEN POOL, then enters a low bottom with noble ſteeps in diſtinct maſſes, the ſides of which are adorned with pendent groves and clumps of different growths; and ſlowly gaining the level, at laſt terminates in the parallel of the palace and pillar; reaching the ſame point with the undeviating viſta, which in its preſent application is a real embelliſhment.

The ancient Roman road, generally known by the appellation of

AKEMAN

AKEMAN STREET, croſſes the viſta from eaſt to weſt; and may be diſtinctly traced near the north lodge. Where the AKEMAN has been broken up, its materials appear to have been an immenſe congeſtion of rubble and ſtones, ſuch as the vicinity ſupplied. Its ridge in many places is ſtill entire, and exhibits a proof of the perſevering induſtry, the indefatigable pains, and the public ſpirit of the Roman coloniſts. At a ſmall diſtance beyond the park, and a little to the right of the AKEMAN, in the pariſh of STONESFIELD, a teſſellated pavement was diſcovered in 1711, which was then generally ſuppoſed to be nothing more than the ſite of a Roman general's tent. In 1779, near the ſame ſpot, the areas of ſeveral other large apartments were found with curious teſſella-

tions, and borders, at once admirable for beauty and device. Adjoining was a hypocauſt, and a bath, and other remains of Roman architecture in brick of the moſt durable texture. Theſe have been chiefly removed or demoliſhed: however, conſiderable maſſes of the pavements are preſerved by Thomas Walker of Henſington, Eſq. and correct drawings of the whole, by Lewington, of Woodſtock (who has ſaved copies), are in the poſſeſſion of the Antiquary Society.

But this park is ſtill more celebrated for its magnificent royal palace, commonly called the MANOR HOUSE, the favourite retreat of ſeveral kings of England at various periods, till the reign of Charles I. when the ſucceeding interval of civil diſſenſion and anarchy, laid it almoſt wholly in ruins. It was not however wholly demoliſhed,

liſhed, till after the building of Blenheim; when every trace of the ancient edifice was removed, and two ſycamore trees were planted to mark its ſite. On entering the park from Woodſtock, theſe preſent themſelves on a bold elevation beyond the river, at a ſmall diſtance from the bridge: their growth is luxuriant; their foliage of the moſt vivid green; they ſpread their broad arms on every ſide; and ſeem to guard the ſpot with religious veneration. Though their appearance is cheerful, though the penſive has no ſhare in the picture; a philoſophic mind can hardly view them without impreſſions more ſtrong than the moſt ſplendid ruin could have excited. At the ſight of a ruin, it is natural to indulge reflections on paſt ſcenes, to recal images of ancient grandeur, and to

connect what remains with what is loſt. Here we cannot connect, but we may create.—Fancy is at liberty to raiſe the pile, to faſhion its ornaments, and to adapt its appendages without a guide, and without control; and fancy will ever exceed realities.—We thus erect the viſionary palace;—we people it with the gay, the illuſtrious, and the good, we liſten to the voice of melody—we pourtray the ſprightly dance, the proud levee;—at once they vaniſh; and we wake to the recollection of the vanity of art, and the ravages of time, which here ſhew their completeſt triumph. Of the regal dome, not a wreck remains; and where kings gave audience, and vaſſals knelt, the herds crop the velvet green.

Campos ubi Troja fuit.

This

This place can boaſt a very remote antiquity. Hiſtory informs us, that King Ethelred, who began his reign in 866, held a parliament at Woodſtock Palace; and Lambard, in his Collection of Saxon Laws, recites ſeveral ſtatutes then and there enacted. His brother, the illuſtrious ALFRED, who mounted the throne in 872, not only occaſionally reſided at Woodſtock, but, according to a MS. in the Cottonian library, ſpent ſo much of the little ſpace here, in which he was diſengaged from his numerous wars, that he tranſlated *Boethius de Conſolatione Philoſophiæ*; and about the ſame time he is ſuppoſed to have founded the Univerſity of Oxford. Camden, in his Britannia, ſays that King Ethelred, father of Edward the Confeſſor, "Apud Woodſtock olim ordinum conventum habuit, et leges tulit;"

that is, held a convention of the ſtates at Woodſtock, and paſſed laws. And from the cenſual roll, or ſurvey made in the 18th year of William the Conqueror, commonly called Doomſday Book, it appears that Woodſtock was then a borough, and that the demeſnes were afforeſted. Rous, the hiſtorian, tells us, that this was the firſt park in England: in point of natural beauty and elegant embelliſhment, it ſtill maintains priority! Dugdale ſeems to be of Rous's opinion; and William of Malmeſbury, and others, inform, that King Henry I. furniſhed it with foreign wild beaſts, which he procured from other princes, or bought up at a great expence. Certain it is, that this monarch at leaſt beautified the palace, and ſurrounded the park with a wall, which in many places ſtill remains: whether he built

built them from the ground, is by no means ſo clear.

At the mention of Woodſtock, the name of Henry II. naturally occurs: for who has not heard of HENRY and ROSAMOND! This celebrated beauty was daughter of Walter Lord Clifford. At the early age of fifteen, ſhe poſſeſſed ſufficient charms to captivate a warrior king, who ſeduced her from her friends, and contrived a bower for her reception, and a labyrinth by which her romantic retreat might communicate with the palace, and prevent any ſurpriſal from the vindictive jealouſy of his Queen. This precaution, however, is well known to have proved ineffectual; and the lovely frail one at length fell a victim to the reſentment of the injured and the implacable Eleanor.

The

The manner of her diſcovery, and the kind of death ſhe ſuffered, are variouſly related, and much diſputed; and authentic hiſtory does not furniſh us with a clue to unravel them. Roſamond was buried in the choir of Godſtow nunnery, near Oxford, where a magnificent tomb was erected to her memory, ſurrounded with tapers continually burning; till the beginning of King Richard's reign, when Hugh Biſhop of Lincoln, in his primary viſitation, came to Godſtow; and being offended at the extraordinary veneration he ſaw paid to a woman of her unfortunate deſcription, burſt into a fit of zeal, and ordered her remains to be removed, and depoſited in a leſs ſacred place. His injunction was complied with; and the nuns interred her in their chapter-

houſe,

houſe, covering her grave with a flat ſtone, on which was inſcribed no more than TOMBA ROSAMUNDI. What is now ſhewn for Roſamond's tomb, and ſome miſerable verſes recorded as her epitaph, are only inventions to amuſe the credulous, and baits for the ignorant: at the diſſolution of the monaſtery more important objects were obliterated, more ſingular circumſtances conſigned to oblivion.

Curioſity will be eager to be gratified with an account of her bower, her labyrinth, and her bath; circumſtances ſo univerſally known by report, and ſo intimately connected with the ſcenes deſcribed.—Of the bower, there is neither hiſtory or drawing extant—of the labyrinth ſome traces are ſaid to have been diſcovered,

covered, and ſome utenſils, coins, and antiquities dug up, and preſented to Lady Diana Spencer by the workmen, when the ground was leveling by order of the firſt Duke of Marlborough. The ſpring that muſt have ſupplied her bath, ſtill remains and retains her name; and is truly

"Health to the ſick, and ſolace to the ſwain."

It is ſituated in a ſmall dell in the ſide of the hill, a little to the weſtward of the grand bridge, and a few paces from the edge of the lake. It guſhes from an artificial aperture in the ſtones which line the cavity on the north to a conſiderable elevation, with a fall of nearly two feet, and a copiouſneſs and equability in every ſeaſon, that few ſprings exceed. Scarcely has it ſmoothed its ruffled wave before it is received into a capacious bath, about five feet deep,

and

and twenty ſquare, lined at the bottom and on the ſides with freeſtone, and fenced with iron paliſades. The water of the bath is ſo pellucid and tranquil, that it reflects objects like a mirror; and for this purpoſe poets and lovers have aſſigned it to beauty, which ſeems to be indigenous here.

The facing over the fall is formed of a duſky coloured ſtone; the layers terminate abruptly on the ſides with the reſemblance of a ruin; and the whole has the air of antiquity. To increaſe this appearance it bears many marks of the univerſal paſſion—the love of fame. This has prompted numbers to carve the initials of their names, and the year of the exploit, with characteriſtic rudeneſs, and with a ſeeming zeal for their preſervation. In one part we ſee names which now, perhaps, have no other memorial; in another,

another, recent efforts to impreſs a remembrance by obliterating what former engravers have left as monuments of their exiſtence. Thus it is in life! in the moſt important tranſactions, in the greateſt performances.

In a ſolitude like this, where the ſubject and the ſcene are apt to inſpire penſive thoughts, ſuch traces are not unpleaſing, they tend to promote one general effect, to which every circumſtance here contributes—the love of contemplation. The hawthorn, mixed with woodbines and other ſhrubs, overhang the ſpring, and forms a deep irregular ſhade; the wandering ivy and its kindred plants claſp the ſtones that line the precipice, and fill up the fiſſures and interſtices with their roots. Behind riſes a grove, which is rapidly thicken-

ing its gloom, and aſſiſting to render the ſpot more ſequeſtered. The birds carol around; the nightingale, perhaps, pours forth her plaintive notes; and the daſhing of the water unites with the reverberations of the neighbouring echo to cheriſh a ſoothing melancholy. When this mood has been indulged till relief becomes deſirable, we may turn to the Palace. The aſpect on this hand is more cheerful and open. The ſombre, however, ſtill prevails, particularly at even; it is inſeparable from the ſeaſon and the ſpot. The following inſcription was penned under its influence, on a report that an urn was intended to be erected over the ſpring; if the verſe ſhould be neglected, let the moral be remembered!

INSCRIP-

INSCRIPTION.

Ye Fair! who tread in Pleaſure's mazy Round,
Where many a Snare, and many a Gulph is found;
For once reflect! with penſive Step draw nigh,
And let this Moral gain th' attentive eye:
" Birth, Titles, Fortune,—all that Fate can give,
" Or the moſt favour'd of your Sex receive;
" Youth's blooming Grace, ev'n Roſamonda's charms,
" All that delights, or captivates and warms,
" Weigh'd in the Scale 'gainſt Virtue are but vain,—
" Link'd with fair Virtue, deathleſs Wreaths obtain
" While Vice lives only in the Roll of Fame,
" To wake your Pity, or to warn from Shame! "

At Woodſtock Palace, Henry II. received the homage of Malcolm King of Scotland, and Rice Prince of Wales, in 1164; and likewiſe conferred the honour of knighthood on Jeffery ſurnamed Plantagenet, his ſecond

cond ſon by the fair Roſamond. The nuptials of the Lady Ermengard, daughter of Richard Viſcount Beaumont, couſin to Henry, with WILLIAM King of Scotland, were alſo celebrated here with the utmoſt magnificence for four ſucceſſive days.

EDMUND, the ſecond ſon of Edward I. was born at this place, from thence called Edmund of Woodſtock; as well as EDWARD, eldeſt ſon of Edward III. commonly known by the appellation of the Black Prince, whoſe early valour and brilliant exploits, joined to the moſt poliſhed and conciliating manners, endear his memory to every lover of his country. This gallant prince, who died at the age of 46, is ſaid once to have reſided at the manſion anciently called PRINCE'S PLACE, now Dr. Mavor's academy. Woodſtock is likewiſe the

birth place of THOMAS, the ſixth ſon of Edward III. ſurnamed in hiſtory from the ſite of his nativity.

CHAUCER, the father of Engliſh poetry, ſpent ſome of his happieſt hours at Woodſtock; and if we make allowance for the ruſt of age, and the obſolete modes of diction that now obſcure his works, no one has ever equalled him in the various walks of poetry he adopted. Chaucer's houſe was ſituated at the right angle of the area before the triumphal gate which has been previouſly mentioned: the ſite is at preſent occupied by Mr. Prior; and though few remains of antiquity are now to be traced, the traveller of taſte never fails to eye the ſpot with a fond enthuſiaſm: he venerates the reſidence of original genius; and blames that

ſpirit

ſpirit of improvement which has obliterated veſtiges, that ought to have been deemed ſacred by every Briton. Several writers of reputation mention a huge folio of his works in MS. chained to a reading deſk in his houſe, and which is ſaid to have been extant in the beginning of the preſent century, or the end of the laſt: that it once exiſted we have no doubt; but the preciſe time when it diſappeared, and what has become of it, are totally unknown.

Akenſide's inſcription for a ſtatue of the ancient bard, though his memory does not ſtand in need of ſuch frail memorials, nor is likely to obtain them, will not be improperly ſubjoined, nor appear inapplicable to the purpoſe for which it was intended.

Such was old CHAUCER, ſuch the placid mien
Of him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt
For many a cheerful day. Theſe ancient walls
Have often heard him while his legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand pourtraying. Tho' perchance
From BLENHEIM's towers, O ſtranger! thou art come
Glowing with CHURCHILL's trophies, yet in vain
Doſt thou applaud them if thy breaſt be cold
To him this other hero, who in times
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land.

With regard to the former celebrity of this place we may add, that the Princeſs ELIZABETH was confined at Woodſtock by her cruel ſiſter Queen Mary;

Mary; and her life was once in the moſt imminent danger, from a fire that broke out under the room where ſhe ſlept; but whether this fire was kindled intentionally, or merely through accident, remains among the number of undeveloped myſteries with which the path of antiquity is ſtrewed. While here, ſhe is reported to have ſhed tears on ſeeing a milk-maid, ſinging, paſs before the window of her priſon, and to have expreſſed a wiſh that ſhe had been born to a ſituation as humble and as happy; a circumſtance on which the elegant and plaintive Shenſtone has beautifully enlarged.

Hark to yonder milk-maid ſinging
Cheerly o'er the brimming pail;
Cowſlips all around her ſpringing,
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

Never yet did courtly maiden
Move ſo ſprightly, look ſo fair;
Never breaſt with jewels laden,
Pour a ſong ſo void of care.

Would indulgent Heaven had granted
Me ſome rural damſel's part!
All the empire I had wanted
Then, had been my ſhepherd's heart.

The following verſes were written with charcoal on the window ſhutter of the room where ſhe was confined. They are the compoſition of a great Queen, and derive their chief merit from this peculiarity.

Oh Fortune! how thy reſtleſſe wavering ſtate
Hath fraught with cares my troubled witt,
Witneſs this preſent priſonn whither Fate
Could bear me, and the joys I quit.
Thou cauſedſt the guiltie to be loſed
From bandes wherein are innocents incloſed;

Cauſing

Cauſing the guiltles to be ſtraites reſerved,
And freeing thoſe that death well deſerved;
But by her malice can be nothing wroughte,
So God ſend to my foes all they have thoughte.

ELIZABETHE PRISONER.

Anno Dom. 1555.

During the time of the civil wars, the Palace, as has been previouſly mentioned, ſuffered irreparable damage, chiefly by the mercenary and rapacious diſpoſition of the uſurper and his dependents, by whom part of the very materials were expoſed to ſale in 1653. The commiſſioners who aſſembled here in 1649, by order of the Rump Parliament, to ſurvey the royal property, and had taken up their reſidence in the king's apartments, were terribly alarmed by ſuppoſed ſpirits, which inceſſantly

diſturbed their reſt during their ſtay; but the real actor in this farce, was one Joe Collins, ſince called the merry devil of Woodſtock, though at that time dignified with the epithet of Juſt. This man, it ſeems, was a royaliſt, and anxious to impreſs the commiſſioners with an idea of ſupernatural agency againſt their proceedings; and perhaps their own conſciences aided the impoſture.

A circumſtance of this kind would have been deemed unworthy regard, had it not been to introduce a remark on the triumph of true philoſophy, and the decline of ſuperſtition. A learned doctor, a profeſſor in the Univerſity, in the reign of Charles II. fills ſeveral pages of his book on Natural Hiſtory with a detail of the pranks of this imaginary demon, among other reveries as ridiculous, which

which at this period would disgrace the belief of anility. What a pleasing revolution! Science is now no longer obscured by barbarous hypotheses, nor true religion sullied, by faith in demons licensed to range, and witches permitted to torment.

WOODSTOCK.

THE borough of WOODSTOCK is situated on an eminence, near the banks of the Glyme, and enjoys every local advantage. It is governed by a mayor, aldermen, and common council; and returns two burgesses to serve in parliament.

The immunities and franchises conferred on this corporation, by the favour

favour of our ancient ſovereigns, are pretty conſiderable: in particular, Queen Elizabeth was a great benefactor; and if it were not invidious to exhibit living characters to public view, Woodſtock might now boaſt of a patron, whoſe munificence eclipſes that of all the kings and queens that ever honoured it with their reſidence. The town-hall and the church will be laſting monuments of liberality in expence,—of utility in its application!

The inns furniſh the beſt entertainment and accommodation to travellers. The inhabitants manufacture ſteel and gloves to a very conſiderable extent; and in both branches, the peculiar excellence of their fabricks has gained them diſtinguiſhed pre-eminence. In one reſpect, they have

have left the fable of Midas no longer an object of wonder: at their touch the old nails of a horſe-ſhoe are converted into articles of infinitely greater price, according to their weight, than the pureſt gold.

About thirty years ago, in pulling down an old building near the church, ſeveral pieces of ancient coin were found, and among them two of the Emperor VESPASIAN, with this inſcription round the head, in characters very legible and neat, "VESPASIANUS ROM. IMP. AUG. On the reverſe JUDÆA CAPTA. The Romans indubitably had ſeveral ſtations in this vicinity: Alecti Caſtra, or ALCHESTER on the Akeman, was leſs than ten miles diſtant; and the teſſellated pavement near Stonesfield is an unqueſtionable veſtige of that

once

once potent nation. But this is not intended as a work on antiquities—if it were, the field is open: yet who would prefer exploring the earth for urns, rusty coins, and half obliterated castrametations, to the contemplation of living art and blooming nature, arrayed in their gayest dress, and captivating with their brightest charms!



FINIS.